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ABSTRACT

This study reports the findings of that part of the 1969-70 National Assessment of Educational Progress which surveyed certain kinds of writing skills. Respondents were children, teenagers, and young adults (ages 26-35) who wrote exercises related to the objectives of (1) writing to communicate adequately in a social situation, (2) writing to communicate adequately in a business or vocational situation, (3) writing to communicate adequately in a scholastic situation, and (4) appreciating the value of writing. The survey is divided into four chapters, each of which reports detailed results of the exercises related to the four objectives. Results are discussed and reported in graph and chart form and are presented for an age group as a whole and for groups representing (1) different regions of the country, (2) both sexes, (3) different races, (4) different sizes and types of communities, and (5) for persons having different parental education. (See related document ED 051 245.) (Some material will have poor reproducibility due to type size.) (DI)

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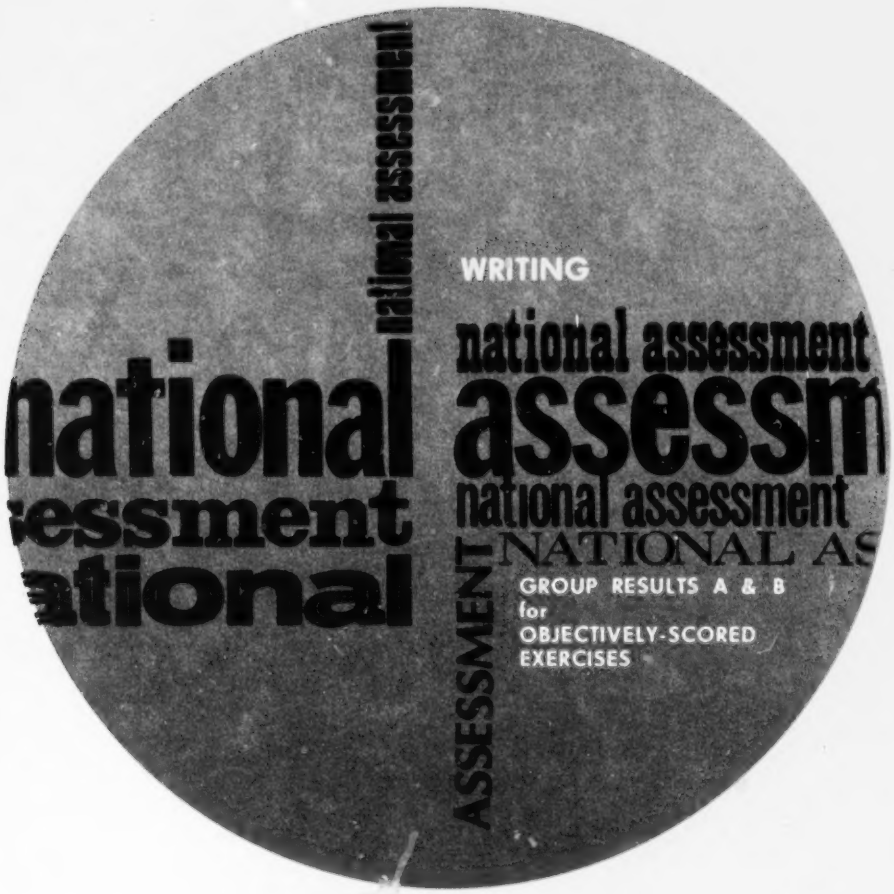

REPORT 11

1969-70 Assessment

National Results by Region, Sex, Color, Size and Type of Community, and Parental Education

US 800 581

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS
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#02-R-03	Reading: Written Directions (Theme 3)	May, 1973
#02-R-05	Reading: Gleaning Significant Facts from Passages (Theme 5)	May, 1973
# 7	Science: Group Results B	May, 1973
#02-R-08	Reading: Critical Reading (Theme 8)	May, 1973
#02-L-04	Literature: A Survey of Reading Habits (Theme 4)	May, 1973
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Education Commission of the States
Suite 300, 1860 Lincoln Street
Denver, Colorado 80203

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NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS

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REPORT 11

WRITING: Group Results A and B for Objectively-Scored Exercises

1969-70 Assessment

National Results by Region, Sex, Color, Size and Type of Community, and Parental Education

May, 1973

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NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS

James A. Hazlett
Administrative Director

J. Stanley Ahmann
Staff Director

George H. Johnson
Associate Staff Director

This report was written by John V. Knapp and Henry B. Slotnick of the Research and Analysis Department, National Assessment of Educational Progress. The data used in the analyses are the result of many persons working together.

Staff support was provided by:

Operations Department
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The following members of the NAEP Analysis Advisory Committee reviewed and advised on reporting:

William E. Coffman
University of Iowa

Lyle V. Jones
University of North Carolina

John Gilbert
Harvard University

Frederick Mosteller
Harvard University

John W. Tukey (Chairman)
Princeton University

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SUMMARY

The following paragraphs summarize the information contained in this report. The terms used in the paragraphs (such as Northeast, non-Black, medium city, and some high school) are defined in the Introduction, while the results for the exercises are spelled out in more detail in succeeding chapters.

Objective I: Write to Communicate Adequately in a Social Situation

Generally, persons living in the Northeast, Central and West regions performed similarly to one another and better than people living in the Southeast. Males typically performed less well than females, Blacks less well than non-Blacks. People from different sizes and types of communities usually performed as follows: affluent suburbs and suburban fringes had the highest percentages of success; medium city, rest of the big city, and small city performed less well; and rural and extreme inner city showed the lowest levels of success. Those who reported at least one parent having continued beyond high school performed better than those whose parents graduated from high school but did not continue. Both of these groups performed better than groups of respondents having parents who did not attend or who did not finish high school.

Objective II: Write to Communicate Adequately in a Business or Vocational Setting

A clear pattern emerged here showing that the Northeast performed better than the Central region, the Central better than West, and West better than the Southeast. Females responded correctly more often than males, non-Blacks more often than Blacks. Performances decreased moving from affluent suburbs to suburban fringe to medium size cities to small cities, to the rest of the big city, and to extreme rural and extreme inner cities. Respondents reporting at least one parent continuing his education past high school performed highest with performances decreasing for persons whose parents were high school graduates, those whose parents had some high school, and those whose parents had no high school.

Objective III: Write to Communicate Adequately in a Scholastic Setting

The only exercise reported here was administered to 9-year-olds. Results of that exercise showed all four regions to have similar percentages of success. Girls performed better than boys; non-Blacks better than Blacks. Children from affluent suburbs and medium cities scored above the nation as a whole, while inner city and rest of the big city children's percentages of success were well below. Children with at least one parent who had not graduated from high school performed least successfully, children having at least one parent who continued his education after high school performed best. The performances for all other parental education groups were of intermediate value and similar to one another in magnitude.

Objective IV: Appreciate the Value of Writing

Given the assumption that actually writing something indicates an appreciation of writing, most people appreciate writing. The natures of the materials written varied with the group of respondents and the exercise in question.

INTRODUCTION

This report describes how children, teenagers and young adults (age 26-35) performed on certain kinds of writing tasks. The tasks asked the respondents to fill out forms, address envelopes and answer questions about the attitudes they hold about writing and the kinds of things they write. The tasks were developed (by the Educational Testing Service of Princeton, New Jersey) and administered by National Assessment.

National Assessment is a federally funded project whose purpose is gathering information on the knowledges, skills and attitudes of children (age 9), teenagers (age 13 and 17) and young adults (age 26-35).[1] The assessment is concerned with 10 academic areas, one being writing (i.e., composition skills).

During the 1969-70 academic year, National Assessment administered a series of writing exercises to national probability samples at each of the four ages. Each respondent was given a "package"--a group of writing, science and citizenship exercises collected into a booklet. Exercises asking the respondents to try writing exercises typically appeared throughout the packages. No more than 45 minutes was needed to complete a package.

National Assessment exercises are related to objectives.[2] The writing objectives are:

I. Write to communicate adequately in a social situation.

II. Write to communicate adequately in a business or vocational setting.

III. Write to communicate adequately in a scholastic situation.

IV. Appreciate the value of writing.

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[1]See F. Womer, What is National Assessment? National Assessment, Denver, 1970, for a description of National Assessment's purposes and procedures.

[2]National Assessment, Writing Objectives, National Assessment, Denver, 1969.

One chapter of this report is devoted to each of these objectives. These chapters typically begin with a brief summary of the results for exercises relating to the chapter's objective and then describe each exercise individually. The format for the presentation of exercises is constant: first, a rationale is presented indicating how the exercise is related to the chapter's objective; second, the exercise itself is presented as it appeared in the assessment package; third, the requirements for an acceptable answer (e.g., the best, correct, or preferred response) are presented; and finally, the results are described. Results are presented for an age group as a whole and for groups representing: (1)different regions of the country, (2) both sexes, (3) different racial groups, (4) persons having different parental education backgrounds, and (5) from different sizes and types of communities.[3] Differences between a group's performance and the national level of success that are large enough to be reliable (i.e., probably not due to random error) are indicated in the exhibits with an asterisk (*) while other differences are not.

Groups representing four regions of the country are described in this volume. The regions of the country are:

Northeast: Delaware, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Massachusetts

Southeast: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia

Central: North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin

West: Hawaii, Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Utah, New Mexico, Nevada, California, Oregon, Washington, Arizona, Colorado, Texas and Oklahoma

Results are not broken down by state; statements about regional results refer to all the people in that region.

There are two racial groups reported: Blacks and non-Blacks. Non-Blacks include Whites, Puerto Ricans, Orientals, and Indians.

---

[3]The results are presented in terms of population estimates. The procedures used appear in Appendix A, Report 3: Writing National Results, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1970).

Everyone taking National Assessment exercises answered a series of home environment questions. One question asked about the highest educational attainment of both of their parents. That parental education information was used to divide respondents into groups for reporting purposes:

No High School: neither parent attended high school

Some High School: at least one parent attended high school but neither parent graduated

High School Graduate: at least one parent finished high school but neither trained beyond high school

Post High School: at least one parent continued his/her education beyond high school (either college or trade school)

The sizes and types of communities the respondents came from were defined in the following ways:

Extreme Inner City: (9.9% of the population) cities with populations of 200,000 or more, the particular part having low socio-economic status (SES)

Rest of the Big City: (11.8% of the population) cities of 200,000 or more which did not qualify as extreme inner city

Urban Fringe: (16.7% of the population) areas around large cities within the same Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA), though not including the extreme affluent suburb

Extreme Affluent Suburb: (10% of the population) all high SES from areas within or close to large cities, or the same SMSA as cities having populations in the range of 150,000 to 200,000

Medium City: (21.4% of the population) cities with populations ranging from 150,000 to 200,000 and middle SES, and all SESs in the same SMSA containing a city with a population between 25,000 and 200,000

Small City: (20.7% of the population) areas with populations between 3,500 and 25,000 covering all SESs

Extreme Rural: (9.6% of the population) areas with a population less than 3,500 within the same SMSA as a large city, areas with a population less than 3,500 and within the same SMSA as a medium city and areas simply having populations less than 3,500

CHAPTER 1

OBJECTIVE I: WRITE TO COMMUNICATE ADEQUATELY IN A SOCIAL SITUATION

Objective I dealt with writing in social situations. Translated into exercises, this objective required respondents to write invitations, thank you notes, record messages and write directions. The success any group had in handling these exercises was due to both the group's ability and the exercise's nature. Thus it was possible that the group may have performed differently (either better or worse) if its members had taken different exercises.

Within any reporting category (such as region), groups of respondents (such as those from the Northeast) had been identified, and it was possible to order the groups according to the percentage of success each had on an exercise. The group having the highest percentage of correct responses was first in the ordering, the group having the next highest percentage was second, and so on until all the groups in the category had been ordered. When this was done for all social writing exercises, the number of times each group was first in the rankings was tabulated, the number of times each group was second was counted, and so on until the position of each group was noted for each exercise. The results of the tabulation are shown in Exhibit 1.

EXHIBIT 1-1. Number of Exercises at Each Rank Order Position for Each Group of Respondents

Reporting Category	Group	Order Position						
Region		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Northeast	5	3	3				
	Southeast			1	10			
	Central	2	7	2				
	West	4	1	5	1			
Sex		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Male	1	10					
	Female	10	1					
Color		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Non-Black	11						
	Black		11					
Size and Type of Community		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Rural				1	1	8	1
	Small City		3	2	2	4		
	Affluent Suburb	6	2		2	1		
	Suburban Fringe	4	2	2	2		1	
	Medium City	1	2	4	2	1	1	
	Rest of Big City		2	3	2	4		
	Extreme Inner City						1	10
Parental Education		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	No High School			2	9			
	Some High School		1	8	2			
	High School Graduate	3	7	1				
	Post High School	8	3					

Exercise R101, Administered at Age 9

Writing a thank you note was a social writing skill 9-year-olds were asked to perform.

> Exercise: Pretend that your grandmother gave you a puppy for your birthday. You named him Inky. Now write a thank you letter to your grandmother.

(The rest of the page provided lines for the response.)

To qualify as acceptable, the note had to contain a legible letter body with some sort of thank you. Children could include other things in their notes (such as greetings or closings), but these were not required for acceptability.

EXHIBIT 1-2

PERCENTAGES OF SUCCESS STARRED EFFECTS INDICATE RELIABLE DIFFERENCES

% OF SUCCESS	GROUP EFFECT	REPORTING CATEGORY GROUP	PERCENTAGE OF SUCCESS 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
87.1	---	NATIONAL	**********
		REGION	
77.9	-9.4*	Southeast	**********
88.5	1.2	West	**********
89.3	1.9	Central	**********
90.9	3.5	Northeast	**********
		SEX	
83.1	-4.3*	Male	**********
91.7	4.4*	Female	**********
		COLOR	
63.5	-23.8*	Black	**********
92.3	4.9*	White	**********
		PARENTAL EDUCATION	
75.2	-12.1*	No High School	**********
90.1	-7.2	Some High School	**********
91.2	3.8*	Graduated High Sch.	**********
92.2	4.8*	Post High School	**********
		SIZE AND TYPE OF COMMUNITY	
64.7	-22.6*	Extreme Inner City	**********
82.5	-4.9	Extreme Rural	**********
86.0	-1.4	Small City	**********
98.9	1.6	Medium City	**********
88.9	1.5	Rest Of Big City	**********
92.4	5.1	Suburban Fringe	**********
91.9	4.6*	Extreme Aff Suburb	**********

Eighty-seven percent of the children handled the task acceptably; only 13% failed to write notes containing some sort of thank you in a readable letter body. More specifically, 95% wrote

readable letter bodies with or without thank you's; 89% did remember to say thank you, though the letter body may not have been acceptably legible. Many of the children did include information not required by the exercise: better than three-fourths included greetings in their notes, and nine-tenths added a closing.

Children in the Northeastern, Central and Western regions wrote acceptably at approximately similar rates: 91%, 89% and 88%, respectively. In the Southeast, however, only 78% of the children responded acceptably. Although boys and girls both had little difficulty with the exercise, the girls performed acceptably more often than the boys: 92% vs. 83%. The task also appeared to be less difficult for non-Black children (who responded acceptably 92% of the time) than it was for Blacks (64%).

Acceptable completion of the task increased with parental education: children of parents with a high school education or better performed best (better than 9 out of 10 produced acceptable notes), and those whose parents had no high school experience fared least well (only 3 out of 4 responded acceptably).

One-third of the inner city children wrote unacceptable notes. Nine-year-olds in the other STOC categories tended to perform near the national value. The exceptional groups were the suburban fringe and affluent suburbs; these groups both showed success rates 5% higher than the nation as a whole.

Exercise R102, Administered at Age 9

The second social writing skill assessed was the composition of a short letter of invitation.

Exercise: Pretend that you are in Miss Cook's class. Your class is going to give a play called Chief Wahoo's Surprise. As you can see, this poster tells about the play.

Write a short letter inviting a favorite friend or relative to come to see your play. Be sure to put in all the information you think your friend or relative should know.

(Approximately 1/2 page of lined space was provided for the response.)

An acceptable letter included the following: mention of the play, the date, the time and the place. While not required for acceptability, some responses included a greeting, a closing and the name of the sender.

EXHIBIT 1-3

PERCENTAGES OF SUCCESS STARRED EFFECTS INDICATE RELIABLE DIFFERENCES

% OF SUCCESS	GROUP EFFECT	REPORTING CATEGORY	GROUP	PERCENTAGE OF SUCCESS 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
34.8	---	NATIONAL		**********
		REGION		
30.3	-4.5		Southeast	*********
32.5	-2.3		West	**********
36.7	1.9		Central	**********
38.6	3.8		Northeast	**********
		SEX		
27.3	-7.5*		Male	********
42.7	7.9*		Female	**********
		COLOR		
19.7	-15.1*		Black	******
37.5	2.7*		White	**********
		PARENTAL EDUCATION		
20.9	-14.8*		No High School	******
29.8	-5.9		Some High School	*********
36.1	1.4		Graduated High Sch.	**********
40.5	5.7*		Post High School	**********
		SIZE AND TYPE OF COMMUNITY		
15.9	-17.9*		Extreme Inner City	*****
23.0	-11.8*		Extreme Rural	*******
31.0	-3.8		Small City	*********
37.9	3.0		Medium City	**********
31.9	-2.9		Rest Of Big City	*********
44.1	9.4		Suburban Fringe	**********
40.5	5.7		Extreme Aff Suburb	**********

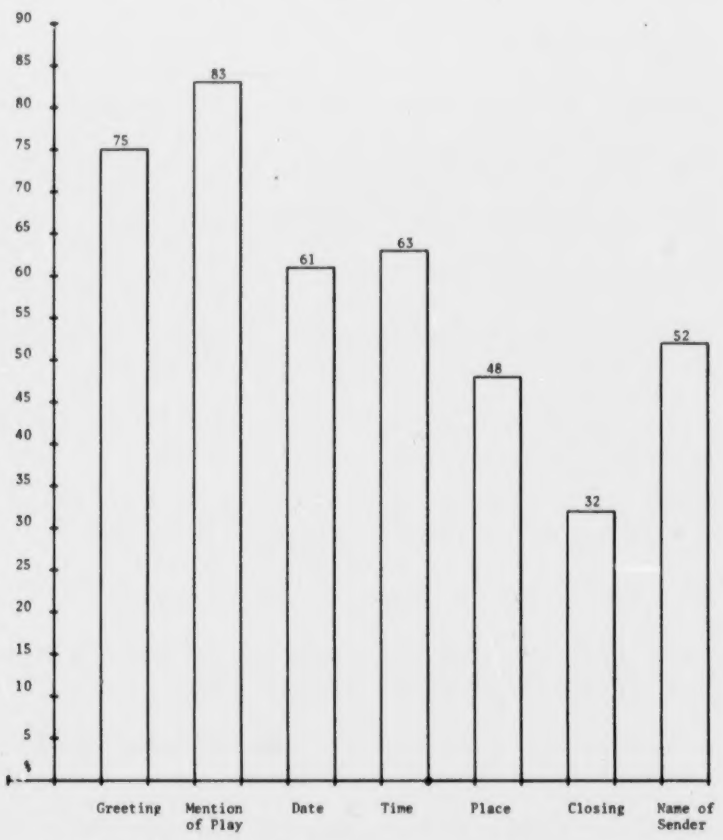
Nationally, less than 35% of the 9-year-olds successfully responded to this exercise. The percentage of acceptable responses for each region was close to the national value, but there was a

large difference in performance between boys (28% acceptable) and girls (43%). Thirty-eight percent of the non-Black children answered acceptably, as did about 20% of the Black children.

The more education a 9-year-old's parents had, the more successful the child was in acceptably completing the task. Further, inner city students performed least well at 17%; suburban fringe children responded best about 44%.

Children showed a pattern in the way they included required information in the letters. Although 83% of the 9-year-olds mentioned the play, 61% and 63%, respectively, included the date and time of the play, while only 48% made reference to where it would be held. Less than 33% included a closing and little over half of the children included the name of the sender.

EXHIBIT 1-4



Exercise R103, Administered at Age 9

A third social writing skill this study examined was the ability to relay a telephone message.

Exercise: You are going to hear two people talking on the telephone. One is a girl named Mary Brown. The other is someone just about your age. His name is Billy. Pretend that YOU are Billy, and LISTEN CAREFULLY to what Mary asks Billy to do.

(The tape recorded phone conversation between Billy and Mary was played for the children. The recorded dialogue went like this:)

BILLY: Hello.

MARY: Hello, who is this?

BILLY: This is Billy.

MARY: Billy, this is Mary Brown. Is your sister there?

BILLY: No, she's at the store.

MARY: Will you give her a message for me?

BILLY: Sure, I guess so. What is it?

MARY: This is pretty important, Billy. Can you get some pencil and paper and write it down?

BILLY: O.K. Wait a minute. (pause) I'm ready now. Go ahead.

MARY: Tell your sister that I'll meet her at Jane's house at 6 o'clock tonight. Got it?

BILLY: No, don't go so fast. Say it again.

MARY: Tell her to meet Mary Brown at Jane's house at 6 o'clock tonight. Got it now?

BILLY: I think so, let me see. Meet Mary Brown at Jane's house at 6 o'clock tonight.

MARY: That's right, Billy, don't forget now. Goodbye.

Mary asked Billy to write a note, didn't she? Now you will hear them again. Pretend that you are Billy again. Listen carefully, and this time try to write the note that Mary asks Billy to write.

(The conversation was played again and the children wrote the required message. One half of a lined page was provided for the response.)

To be considered acceptable, the relayed message had to be a note stating four things: the name of the person to be met (either Mary or Mary Brown), the place (Jane's house), the time of the meeting (6:00 p.m.) and the day (tonight).

EXHIBIT 1-5

PERCENTAGES OF SUCCESS STARRED EFFECTS INDICATE RELIABLE DIFFERENCES

Nationally, 31% of the 9-year-olds wrote notes including all four required pieces of information, though a considerably higher percentage of children included each of the individual items asked for. Specifically, 70% of the children included: the name Mary or Mary Brown, the place where Mary would be met, the day of the meeting and the time. The highest percentage of successful responses (83% correct) was to the item, "time of meeting."

Regionally, 9-year-olds in the Southeast had the lowest percentage of acceptable answers (22%), while those living in the Central part of the country were the most successful with 36% responding acceptably. Boys were generally 5% less successful and girls 5% more successful than the nation as a whole.

Less than 12% of Blacks completed the exercise acceptably, although 35% of those in the non-Black group did so. Following the national pattern, the best response to an individual item by those classified according to color was to "time of meeting." For example, although only one out of eight Black children finished the whole exercise successfully, over 71% of all Black 9-year-olds acceptably recorded the meeting's time.

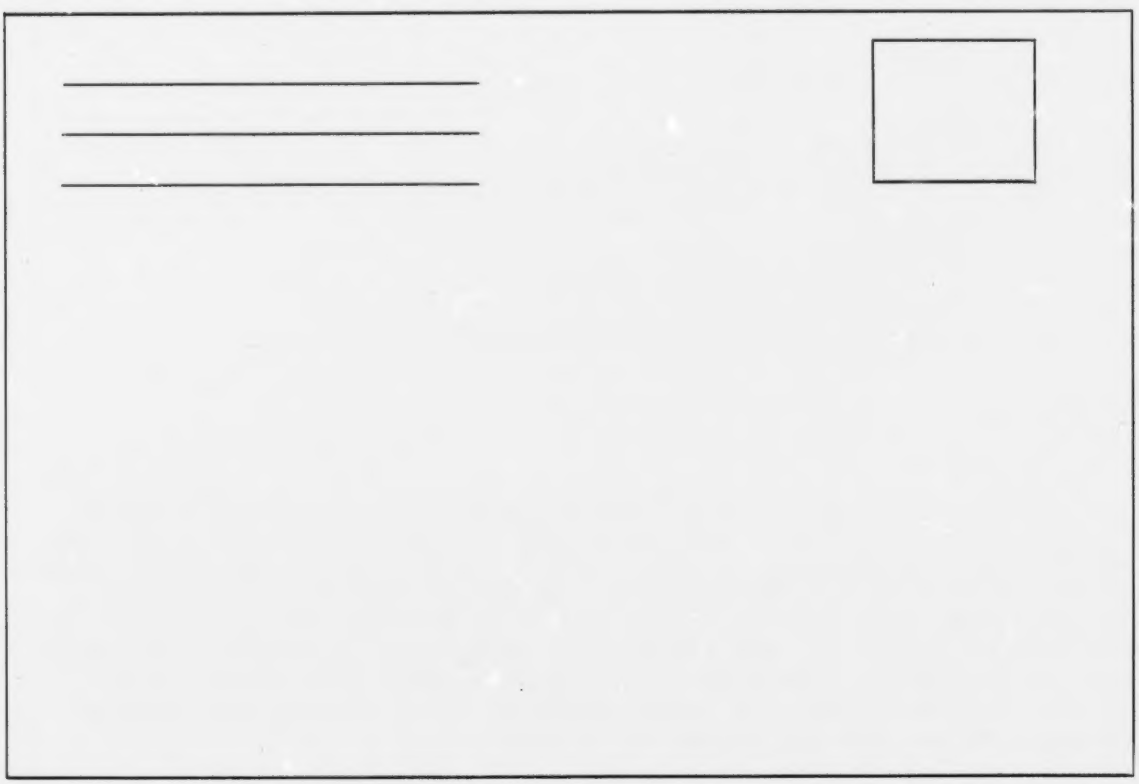
Generally, the more education the parents had, the greater the level of the children's success. Nine-year-olds whose parents received no or only some high school education gave acceptable answers at levels of 25% and 26%, respectively, in contrast to children of parents with post high school educations. They completed the task acceptably 38% of the time.

Fewer 9-year-olds from the inner city gave acceptable answers (13% correct) than children from suburban fringes and the small cities. The percentages of success for the latter two groups were 34%, while children from the affluent suburbs showed a rate of 30%.

Exercise R104, Administered at Age 9

In keeping with Objective I, this exercise measured a writing skill necessary in a social situation: the addressing of an envelope.

> Exercise: Mary Smith lives at 100 Main Street in Hopson, Ohio. The zip code for Hopson is 45601. Mary's grandmother lives at 475 Cactus Land in Sunshine, Arizona. Her name is Mrs. Robert Smith, and her zip code is 86001.
>
> Pretend that Mary wants to send a letter to her grandmother. How should she address the envelope? Fill out the envelope below the way Mary should. Make sure you write down <u>everything</u> that should go on the envelope.



An acceptable response contained six pieces of information in their proper places on the envelope: the sender's name, street name and house number and city and state; and the addressee's name, street and house number, and city and state. If a 9-year-old included a zip code in either address, it had to be correctly entered. A response was unacceptable if required information was left out or included incorrectly.

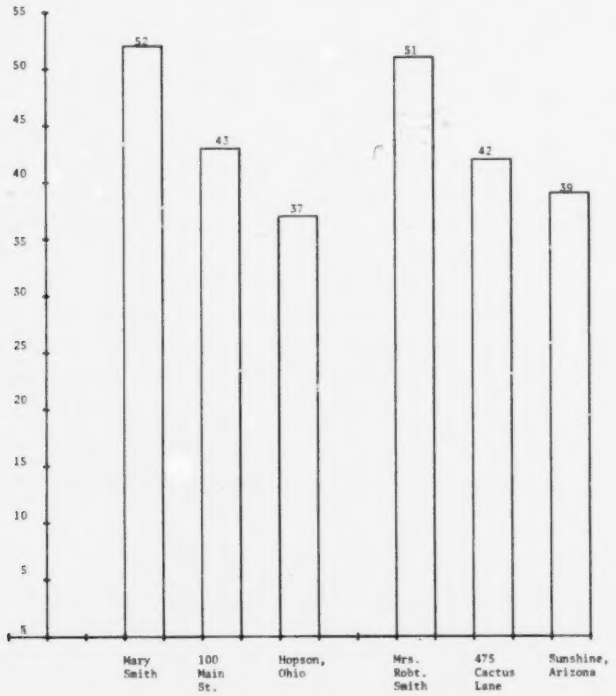
EXHIBIT 1-6

PERCENTAGES OF SUCCESS STARRED EFFECTS INDICATE RELIABLE DIFFERENCES

% OF SUCCESS	GROUP EFFECT	REPORTING CATEGORY GROUP	PERCENTAGE OF SUCCESS 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
28.2	---	NATIONAL	**********
		REGION	
24.9	-3.3	Southeast	*********
19.8	-8.4*	West	*******
29.0	0.8	Central	**********
36.9	8.8*	Northeast	************
		SEX	
19.3	-8.9*	Male	******
38.5	10.3*	Female	************
		COLOR	
12.3	-15.9*	Black	****
31.6	3.4*	White	**********
		PARENTAL EDUCATION	
21.8	-6.4	No High School	*******
33.7	5.5	Some High School	**********
23.8	-4.4	Graduated High Sch.	********
38.3	10.1*	Post High School	************
		SIZE AND TYPE OF COMMUNITY	
10.2	-18.0*	Extreme Inner City	***
14.0	-14.2*	Extreme Rural	****
28.4	0.2	Small City	**********
31.6	3.4	Medium City	**********
19.2	-9.0*	Rest Of Big City	******
31.4	3.2	Suburban Fringe	**********
37.4	9.2	Extreme Aff Suburb	************

Twenty-eight percent of the 9-year-olds correctly entered the six required items, 69% responded in an unacceptable manner, and 3% did not respond at all. Of the 97% who did respond, many exhibited the following pattern: greatest success at entering the required name (either Mary Smith in the sender's address or Mrs. Robert Smith in the receiver's address), somewhat less success in including the street and home number (100 Main Street and 475 Cactus Lane) and least success in entering the cities (Hopson, Ohio, and Sunshine, Arizona).

EXHIBIT 1-7



Those children living in the Northeast had the highest percentage of success with this exercise (performing 9% above the national figure), while those residing in the West were the least successful. Girls scored 19% higher than boys, and non-Black 9-year-olds showed a higher rate of success than children in the Black group.

Those whose parents had a post high school education gave acceptable responses, and, as the amount of parental education declined, the percent of successful responses also decreased. Children of parents with some high school experience did not follow this general pattern: as a group, they had more success than children reporting one parent who had finished high school.

Nine-year-olds in the inner city group did less than half as well as 9-year-olds nationally, and the extreme rural children performed only slightly better than their inner city cousins. Children in the urban fringe, medium cities, and small cities classifications scored about equally well and were second in level of success to 9-year-olds from the affluent suburb category.

Exercise R201, Administered at Age 13

Exercise R201 called for the same social writing skill as R102--writing an informal letter of invitation.

> Exercise: About three months ago, Leo Logan moved from the city to the country. His father bought a farm, and now Leo's address is Rebel Road, Rural Delivery No. 1, Harris, Nebraska 69000.
>
> Leo likes the country, but he misses his old friend Ozzie Drake. Leo's mother says, "Why don't you write to Ozzie and invite him to visit us for a week this summer?"
>
> Write Leo's letter of invitation to Ozzie.

(Approximately 1-1/2 pages of lined space were provided for the response.)

In order for the letter to be considered acceptable, it had to include an invitation to Ozzie.

EXHIBIT 1-8

PERCENTAGES OF SUCCESS STARRED EFFECTS INDICATE RELIABLE DIFFERENCES

% OF SUCCESS	GROUP EFFECT	REPORTING CATEGORY GROUP	PERCENTAGE OF SUCCESS 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
91.2	---	NATIONAL	
		REGION	
87.6	-3.6	Southeast	
92.6	1.4	West	
91.5	0.2	Central	
92.6	1.1	Northeast	
		SEX	
88.7	-2.5*	Male	
94.3	3.0*	Female	
		COLOR	
82.6	-8.6*	Black	
93.2	1.9*	White	
		PARENTAL EDUCATION	
85.8	-5.5	No High School	
83.1	-8.1	Some High School	
93.5	2.2	Graduated High Sch.	
92.7	1.5	Post High School	
		SIZE AND TYPE OF COMMUNITY	
77.0	-14.3*	Extreme Inner City	
81.5	-9.6*	Extreme Rural	
93.6	2.8	Small City	
92.2	0.9	Medium City	
98.7	7.5	Rest Of Big City	
96.0	4.8*	Suburban Fringe	
91.9	0.2	Extreme Aff Suburb	

Nationally, about 9 out of 10 (91%) 13-year-olds answered acceptably. Regionally, those from the Southeast were slightly below the nation (88%), while teenagers living in the other regions of the country had percentages of success closer to the nation as a whole.

Females scored 6% higher than the males. Thirteen-year-olds in the inner city and extreme rural categories were, respectively, 14% and 10% below the nation as a whole, while those from the suburban fringe were 5% higher.

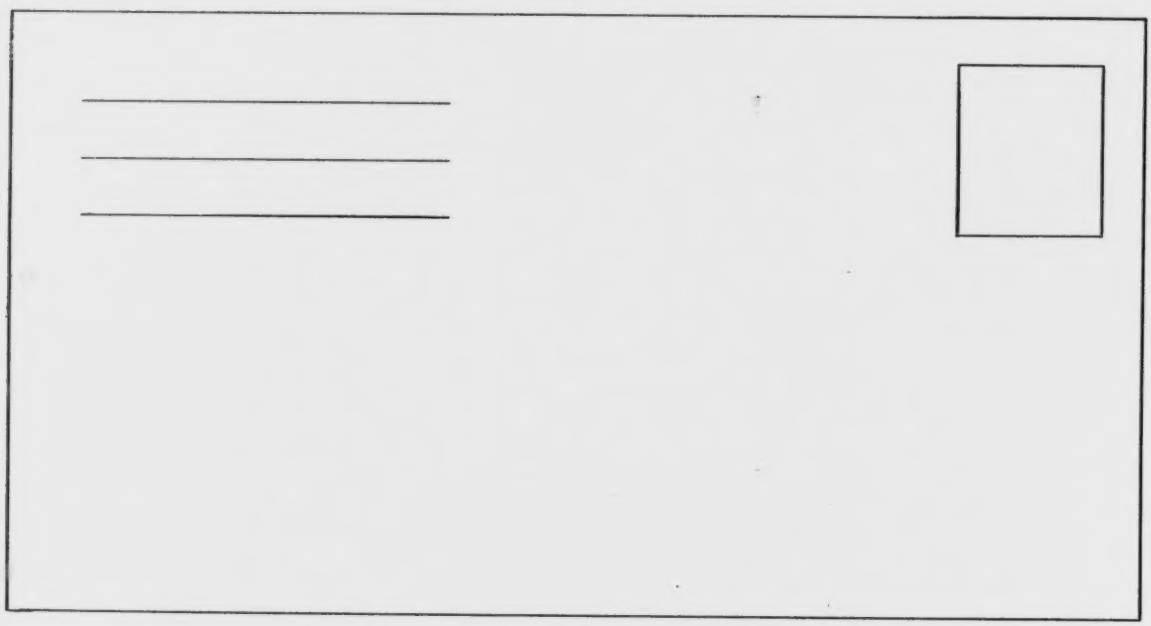
Non-Blacks scored a little above the national figure (93%), while Blacks were somewhat below at 83%. Teenagers of parents with some high school education had rates of success 8% below the national value and 10% below 13-year-olds whose parents graduated from high school.

Exercise R202, Administered at Age 13

This exercise overlaps Exercise R104; and measured the social writing skill of addressing an envelope.

Exercise: Mary Smith lives at 100 Main Street in Hopson, Ohio. The zip code for Hopson is 45000. Mary's grandmother lives at 475 Cactus Lane in Sunshine, Arizona. Her name is Mrs. Robert Smith, and her zip code is 86001.

Pretend that Mary wants to send a letter to her grandmother. How should she address the envelope? Fill out the envelope below the way Mary should. Make sure you write down everything that should go on the envelope.



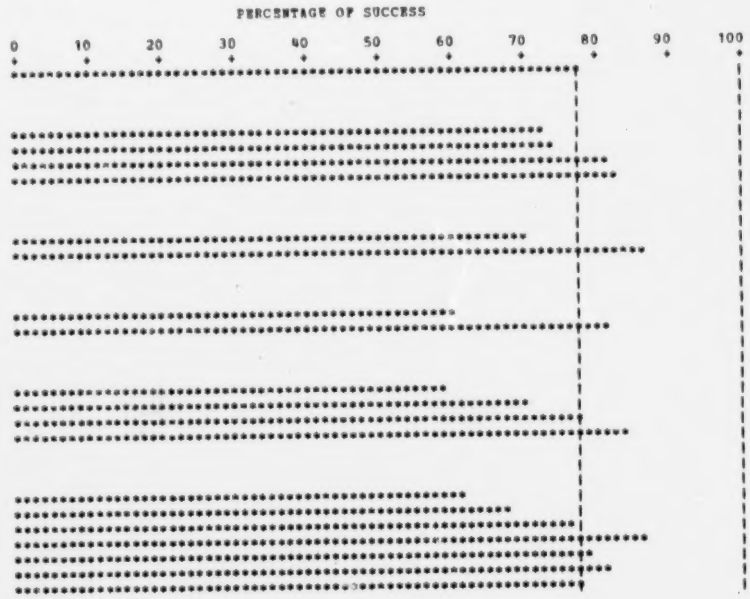
An acceptable response included six pieces of information in their proper places on the envelope: the sender's name, street and house number, and city and state. If a 13-year-old included

a zip code in either address, it had to be correctly entered. Required information left out or included incorrectly resulted in an unacceptable answer.

EXHIBIT 1-9

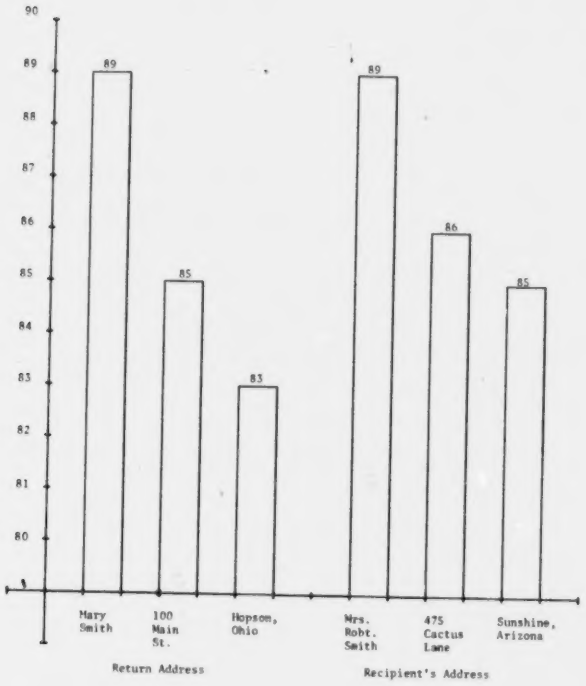
PERCENTAGES OF SUCCESS STARRED EFFECTS INDICATE RELIABLE DIFFERENCES

% OF SUCCESS	GROUP EFFECT	REPORTING CATEGORY	GROUP
77.8	---	NATIONAL	
		REGION	
72.1	-5.7		Southeast
73.8	-4.0		West
81.7	3.9		Central
82.5	4.7		Northeast
		SEX	
69.4	-8.3*		Male
85.9	8.1*		Female
		COLOR	
59.5	-18.3*		Black
81.8	4.0*		White
		PARENTAL EDUCATION	
58.1	-19.8*		No High School
70.5	-7.2		Some High School
76.9	-0.9		Graduated High Sch.
83.9	6.1*		Post High School
		SIZE AND TYPE OF COMMUNITY	
61.7	-16.1*		Extreme Inner City
67.9	-10.8		Extreme Rural
75.8	-1.9		Small City
86.8	9.0*		Medium City
79.1	1.3		Rest Of Big City
81.7	3.9		Suburban Fringe
77.9	0.1		Extreme Aff Suburb



Seventy-eight percent of the 13-year-olds addressed their envelopes acceptably by including all the required pieces of information, 3% of the teenagers did not respond at all, and 19% wrote unacceptable addresses. Of those responding, most seemed to have less difficulty with the first item on each address, a little more difficulty with the next item, and so on. The pattern is displayed in Exhibit 1-10.

EXHIBIT 1-10



Those 13-year-olds living in the Southeast had a success rate 6 percentage points lower than the national value, and 11% lower than the teenagers living in the Northeast (the regional group that performed most successfully). Females acceptably addressed their envelopes more often than did males (the difference in performance was 16%), and non-Blacks answered somewhat above (4%) the national figure, while Blacks were 18% below it.

Teenagers whose parents were educated beyond high school had the highest percentage of success with this exercise; the lower the level of parental education, the lower the level of success with the exercise.

Inner city 13-year-olds and those in the extreme rural category were less successful (16% and 11% below the national rate, respectively) than those from the rest of big city, small cities, suburban fringes, and affluent suburbs--all of those respondents being close to one another in their rates of acceptable responses. Teenagers from medium cities gave acceptable responses most often, 9% above the nation.

Exercise R203, Administered at Age 13

This exercise (which overlaps Exercise R103) asked respondents to leave a written message.

Exercise: You are going to hear a telephone conversation between two boys, Al and Ben. During the conversation, you will discover that Ben is going to have to write a note to his mother. Listen carefully to find out the things that Ben will have to say in his note. (Children then listened to the conversation reproduced below. It was <u>not</u> printed in the children's booklet.)

(NOW LISTEN TO THE PHONE CONVERSATION)

AL: Hey, Ben, this is Al. I called you to remind you you're supposed to come down to my house for supper tonight before the game.

BEN: Oh yeah, I remember. Your mother and father are going to pick me up on the way back from the barber shop. What time do you think you'll get here?

AL: Oh, around 5 o'clock.

BEN: O.K. I'd better leave a note for my mother. She won't be home until 5:30 and maybe she's forgotten that I won't be eating at home.

AL: You'd better remind her of the ball game, too. She's supposed to pick us up afterwards, isn't she?

BEN: That's right. Your father is taking us to the game but my mother is bringing us home. Thanks for reminding me. I'll write the note right away.

You will now have another chance to hear the conversation between Al and Ben. Listen to it carefully again and then, when the boys have finished talking, write the note that you think Ben should leave for his mother.

(The conversation was repeated again.)

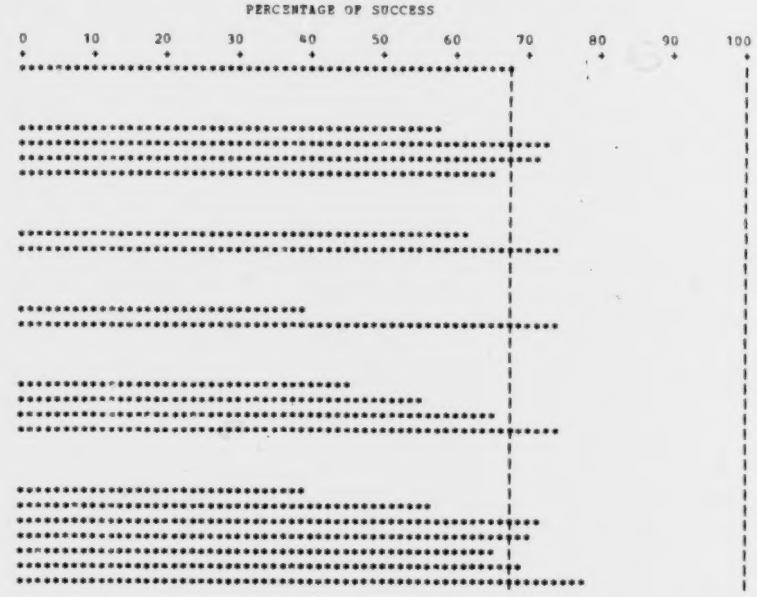
(Approximately 1/2 page of lined space was provided for the response.)

An acceptable message had to include the following: (1) going to Al's house for dinner, (2) Al's father taking them to the game, and (3) Ben's mother picking the boys up after the game.

EXHIBIT 1-11

PERCENTAGES OF SUCCESS STARRED EFFECTS INDICATE RELIABLE DIFFERENCES

% OF SUCCESS	GROUP EFFECT	REPORTING CATEGORY GROUP
67.1	---	NATIONAL
		REGION
57.5	-9.6*	Southeast
73.1	5.9	West
70.9	3.7	Central
64.8	-2.4	Northeast
		SEX
60.9	-6.3*	Male
74.1	7.0*	Female
		COLOR
38.9	-28.2*	Black
73.2	6.0*	White
		PARENTAL EDUCATION
44.5	-22.6*	No High School
54.5	-12.6*	Some High School
64.5	-2.6	Graduated High Sch.
73.9	6.6*	Post High School
		SIZE AND TYPE OF COMMUNITY
38.9	-28.3*	Extreme Inner City
56.0	-11.2	Extreme Rural
71.5	4.3	Small City
69.5	2.4	Medium City
64.9	-2.4	Rest Of Big City
69.2	1.0	Suburban Fringe
77.1	9.9*	Extreme Aff Suburb



Nationally, two-thirds of the 13-year-olds responded acceptably to this exercise. Regionally, Western teenagers had the highest rate of acceptable responses (73%), and Southeastern teenagers had the lowest (58%). Generally, females were more successful than males (by 13%), and non-Blacks (73%) fared better than Blacks (39%). Thirty-nine percent of the inner city teenagers wrote acceptable notes, while those in the other STOC categories performed progressively higher with the affluent suburb group having the highest rate of all, 77%. The exception to this upward pattern involved teenagers from the suburban fringe--the rate of acceptable responses there was 1% above the national value but somewhat below the rate for teenagers in small places. A similar upward movement appeared in the parental education category: 13-year-olds whose parents had no or only some high school education were 23% below the national figure while teenagers whose parents had a post high school education were 7% above the national value.

Exercise R301, Administered at Age 17

Like Exercises R103 and the preceding exercise, this exercise assessed the ability to relay a written message.

Exercise: You are going to hear a telephone conversation between two girls, Peggy and Carol. During the conversation, you will discover that Carol is going to have to write a note to her mother. Listen carefully to find out the things that Carol will have to say in her note. (Youngsters then listened to the conversation reproduced below. It was <u>not</u> printed in their booklet.)

(NOW LISTEN TO THE PHONE COVERSATION)

CAROL: Hello.

PEGGY: Hello, Carol. This is Peggy. I called to remind you that you are supposed to come to my house for supper tonight before the rehearsal.

CAROL: Yes, I remember. You and your mother are going to pick me up on your way back from the store. What time do you think you'll get here?

PEGGY: Oh, about 5, I guess.

CAROL: Then I'd better leave a note for my mother. She won't be home until 5:30 and she may have forgotten I won't be eating at home.

PEGGY: You'd better remind her about the rehearsal, too. She's supposed to pick us up afterwards, isn't she?

CAROL: That's right. Your mother is taking us to the rehearsal but my mother is supposed to bring us home. Thanks for reminding me. I'll write a note right away.

You will now have another chance to hear the conversation between Peggy and Carol. Listen to it carefully again and then, when the girls have finished talking, write the note that you think Carol should leave for her mother.

(NOW LISTEN TO THE PHONE CONVERSATION AGAIN)

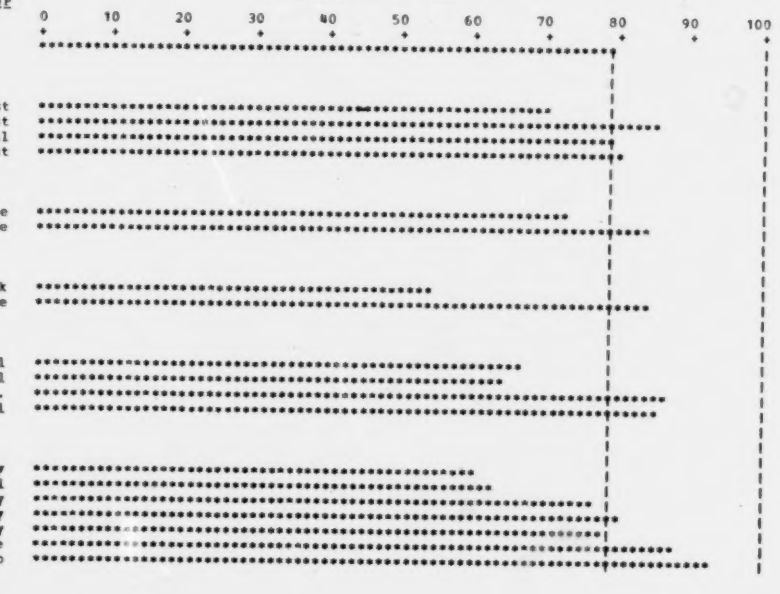
(Approximately 1/2 page of lined space was provided for the response.)

An acceptable response included the following: a note which stated that: (1) Carol is going to Peggy's house for dinner, (2) Peggy's mother is taking them to the rehearsal (or the reader should be able to infer this information), and (3) Carol's mother should pick them up after the rehearsal. A response that was <u>not</u> acceptable omitted any of the pieces of information above.

EXHIBIT 1-12

PERCENTAGES OF SUCCESS STARRED EFFECTS INDICATE RELIABLE DIFFERENCES

% OF SUCCESS	GROUP EFFECT	REPORTING CATEGORY	GROUP
78.6	---	NATIONAL	
		REGION	
70.2	-8.4*		Southeast
85.6	7.0*		West
78.2	-0.4		Central
79.8	1.2		Northeast
		SEX	
72.5	-6.1*		Male
84.1	5.5*		Female
		COLOR	
54.3	-24.3*		Black
83.6	5.0*		White
		PARENTAL EDUCATION	
66.3	-12.3		No High School
63.6	-15.0*		Some High School
85.9	7.2*		Graduated High Sch.
84.8	6.2*		Post High School
		SIZE AND TYPE OF COMMUNITY	
60.4	-18.2*		Extreme Inner City
62.2	-16.4		Extreme Rural
76.3	-2.5		Small City
79.7	1.1		Medium City
78.0	-0.6		Rest Of Big City
87.9	9.4*		Suburban Fringe
93.1	14.5*		Extreme Aff Suburb



Seventy-nine percent of the 17-year-olds wrote acceptable notes. Regionally, teenagers in the West had rates of acceptability 7% higher than the nation as a whole, and 15% higher than those in the Southeast. Females wrote acceptable notes 12% more often than males, and were 6% higher than the nation as a whole. Eighty-four percent of the notes written by non-Black 17-year-olds were acceptable, as were 54% of those written by Blacks.

In the size and type of community category, inner city teenagers gave acceptable answers at a rate 18% below the national figure, while those in the affluent suburb group responded acceptably 15% more often than the nation. Teenagers whose parents had some or no high school education gave fewer acceptable responses (67% and 64%, respectively) than did those whose parents were high school graduates (86%) or whose parents received post high school education (85%).

Exercise R302, Administered at Age 17

This exercise assessed the ability of 17-year-olds to write step-by-step directions, a writing skill necessary for communicating processes and procedures in social and other kinds of settings.

> Exercise: When we make or do something, we usually follow certain procedures. There are certain steps to follow in baking bread, tarring a roof, cutting a pattern, painting a house, repairing a car, developing film, changing a tire, and other such activities. Choose something that you know how to make or do. Describe from the beginning the steps that you follow in order to make it or do it. Make the directions as simple and clear as possible. Someone who is not familiar with the process that you are describing should be able to understand and follow your directions.

(Approximately 1-1/4 pages of lined space were provided for the response.)

An acceptable response must include all steps needed to follow the procedure. Acceptable responses were subdivided into one of two categories: (1) acceptable and specific--the respondent lists all important steps with specific information that would enable the reader to do the job correctly; or (2) acceptable but not specific--the respondent mentions all the important steps, but does not give enough detail to enable the reader to do the job correctly. For example, a recipe is given, but there is no mention of the quantity of the ingredients. Unacceptable responses omitted a step necessary for the procedure, or gave the reader insufficient information to follow the procedure. For example, a description was given of how to change a tire but omitted pulling on the parking brake or placing the car in "park." Another example concerns cutting a pattern and only states, "follow the directions."

Better than three out of four 17-year-olds wrote acceptable directions though only 59% wrote directions that were specific (Exhibit 1-14).

Regionally, acceptable and specific directions appeared most often in the West--almost 6% above the national level--while those in the Southeast were 13% below the nation as a whole. Directions written by teenagers living in the Central and Northeastern regions were close to the national figure. Nonspecific acceptable essays (Exhibit 1-13), written in the West and Northeast regions, were close to the national percentage; those in the Southeast and Central parts of the country were below the nation as a whole.

Acceptable and specific essays were written by a slightly larger percentage of females than males; the gap increased to 5% when acceptable but both specific and nonspecific essays were included. Black teenagers wrote considerably fewer acceptable and specific essays (20% less than the national rate), while non-Black 17-year-olds scored slightly above (3%) the figure for the nation.

As parental education increased, the percentage of those writing acceptable and specific directions also increased. For example, teenagers of parents with only some high school experience scored 10% below the nation as a whole, while those whose parents enjoyed a post high school education wrote acceptably at a rate 6% above the national figure.

Turning to the size and type of community category, 17-year-olds from the inner cities performed less successfully than the nation as a whole; those from the affluent suburbs were somewhat more successful than teenagers nationally; and those from the other communities all ranged relatively close to the national figure.

EXHIBIT 1-13

PERCENTAGES OF SUCCESS STARRED EFFECTS INDICATE RELIABLE DIFFERENCES

% OF SUCCESS	GROUP EFFECT	REPORTING CATEGORY	GROUP
15.9	---	NATIONAL	
		REGION	
26.8	10.0*		Southeast
16.7	-0.1		West
12.9	-3.9*		Central
13.5	-3.3		Northeast
		SEX	
14.1	-2.7*		Male
19.0	2.2*		Female
		COLOR	
16.9	0.1		Black
16.6	-0.2		White
		PARENTAL EDUCATION	
19.7	1.9		No High School
14.3	-2.5		Some High School
19.5	1.6		Graduated High Sch.
16.7	-0.1		Post High School
		SIZE AND TYPE OF COMMUNITY	
16.7	-0.1		Extreme Inner City
22.1	5.3		Extreme Rural
14.7	-2.2		Small City
16.6	-0.2		Medium City
21.5	4.7		Rest Of Big City
16.1	-0.8		Suburban Fringe
15.3	-1.5		Extreme Aff Suburb

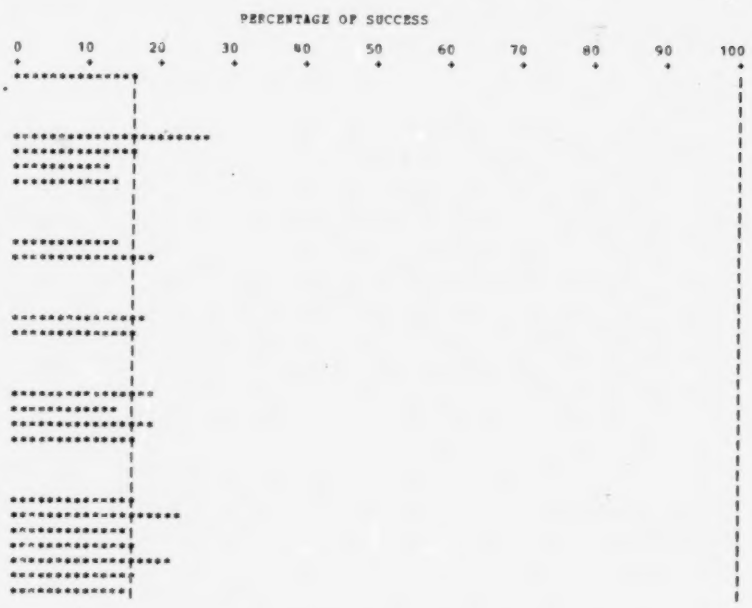
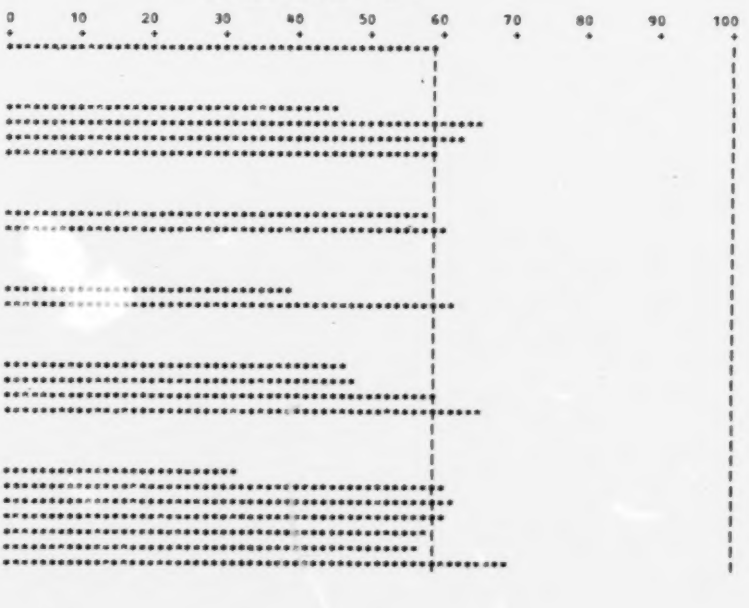


EXHIBIT 1-14

PERCENTAGES OF SUCCESS STARRED EFFECTS INDICATE RELIABLE DIFFERENCES

% OF SUCCESS	GROUP EFFECT	REPORTING CATEGORY	GROUP
58.6	---	NATIONAL	
		REGION	
45.5	-13.0*		Southeast
68.8	5.8		West
62.9	4.2		Central
59.1	0.5		Northeast
		SEX	
57.9	-1.5		Male
59.8	1.2		Female
		COLOR	
38.6	-20.0*		Black
61.6	3.0*		White
		PARENTAL EDUCATION	
45.9	-12.7		No High School
49.1	-10.4*		Some High School
59.2	0.6		Graduated High Sch.
65.0	6.4*		Post High School
		SIZE AND TYPE OF COMMUNITY	
31.0	-27.6*		Extreme Inner City
60.8	1.8		Extreme Rural
60.9	2.3		Small City
60.5	1.9		Medium City
58.0	-0.6		Rest Of Big City
55.8	-2.8		Suburban Fringe
69.1	10.6		Extreme Aff Suburb



Exercise R401, Administered to Adults

This exercise, administered to adults, overlaps R302. It asked adults to write step-by-step directions.

> Exercise: When we make or do something, we usually follow certain procedures. There are certain steps to follow in baking bread, tarring a roof, cutting a pattern, painting a house, repairing a car, developing film, changing a tire, and other such activities. Choose something that you know how to make or do. In the space below, describe from the beginning the steps that you follow in order to make it or do it. Make the directions as simple and clear as possible. Someone who is not familiar with the process that you are describing should be able to understand and follow your directions.

(Approximately 1-1/4 pages of lined space were provided for the response.)

Acceptable responses had to include all the steps needed to complete the described task. These responses were divided into two groups: acceptable but not specific (listing all the steps but with information insufficient to allow the reader to perform the described activity), and acceptable and specific (listing all the steps in sufficient detail to allow the reader to perform the task described). Unacceptable responses omitted steps necessary for successful completion of the task.

Fifty-seven percent of the adults wrote acceptable directions (Exhibit 1-16), as did three-fourths of the teenagers. Thirty-seven percent wrote acceptable and specific responses again demonstrating a drop from the almost three-out-of-five performance for 17-year-olds.

There was only one significant variation from the national percentage of acceptable but not specific responses (Exhibit 1-15): non-Blacks scored 3% higher than the nation. However, there were several important differences among the acceptable and specific responses. The two lower parental education groups had percentages 8 to 11 points below the national figure (37%), while the post high school group's performance was 13 points above the national level. The inner city's percentage of specific responses was less than half the national percentage.

EXHIBIT 1-15

PERCENTAGES OF SUCCESS STARRED EFFECTS INDICATE RELIABLE DIFFERENCES

% OF SUCCESS	GROUP EFFECT	REPORTING CATEGORY GROUP
37.2	---	NATIONAL
		REGION
34.5	-2.7	Southeast
35.8	-1.4	West
37.5	0.2	Central
39.8	2.6	Northeast
		SEX
37.1	-0.1	Male
37.3	0.1	Female
		COLOR
23.1	-14.1	Black
39.7	2.5*	White
		PARENTAL EDUCATION
29.1	-8.1*	No High School
26.4	-10.8*	Some High School
43.0	5.8	Graduated High Sch.
50.4	13.2*	Post High School
		SIZE AND TYPE OF COMMUNITY
15.5	-21.7*	Extreme Inner City
35.3	-1.9	Extreme Rural
39.7	2.5	Small City
30.6	-6.6	Medium City
35.2	-2.0	Rest Of Big City
40.9	3.7	Suburban Fringe
49.2	12.0	Extreme Aff Suburb

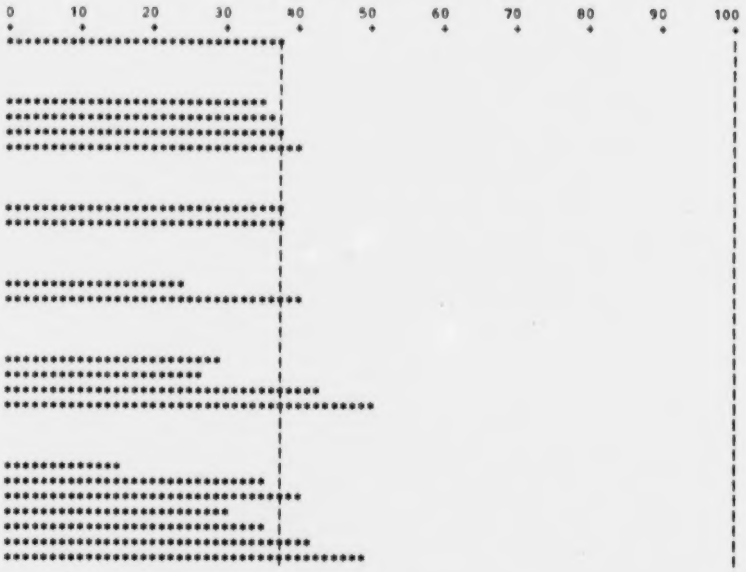
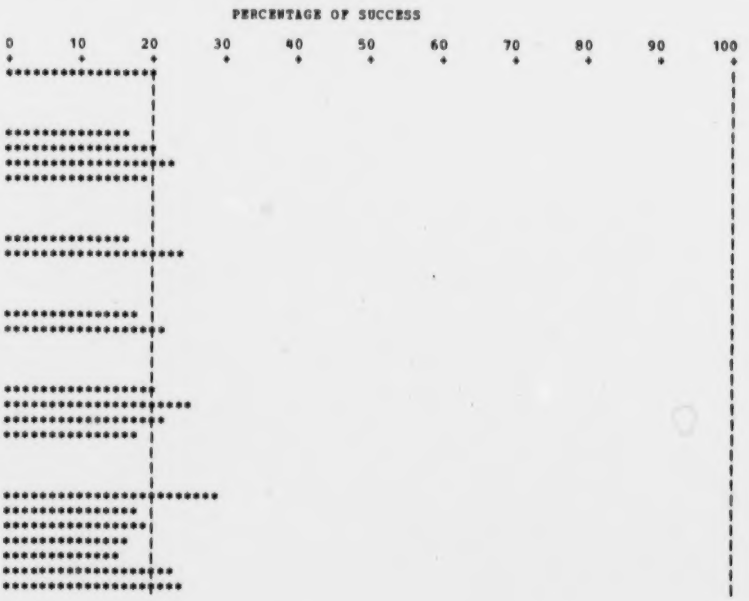


EXHIBIT 1-16

PERCENTAGES OF SUCCESS STARRED EFFECTS INDICATE RELIABLE DIFFERENCES

% OF SUCCESS	GROUP EFFECT	REPORTING CATEGORY GROUP
20.0	---	NATIONAL
		REGION
16.2	-3.8	Southeast
20.0	0.0	West
23.0	3.1	Central
18.6	-1.4	Northeast
		SEX
15.7	-4.3	Male
24.0	4.0	Female
		COLOR
17.4	-2.6	Black
20.8	0.9	White
		PARENTAL EDUCATION
20.4	0.5	No High School
25.4	5.4	Some High School
21.3	1.3	Graduated High Sch.
17.6	-2.3	Post High School
		SIZE AND TYPE OF COMMUNITY
28.6	8.7	Extreme Inner City
17.7	-2.3	Extreme Rural
18.3	-1.7	Small City
16.8	-3.2	Medium City
14.9	-5.0	Rest Of Big City
21.9	1.9	Suburban Fringe
23.3	3.4	Extreme Aff Suburb



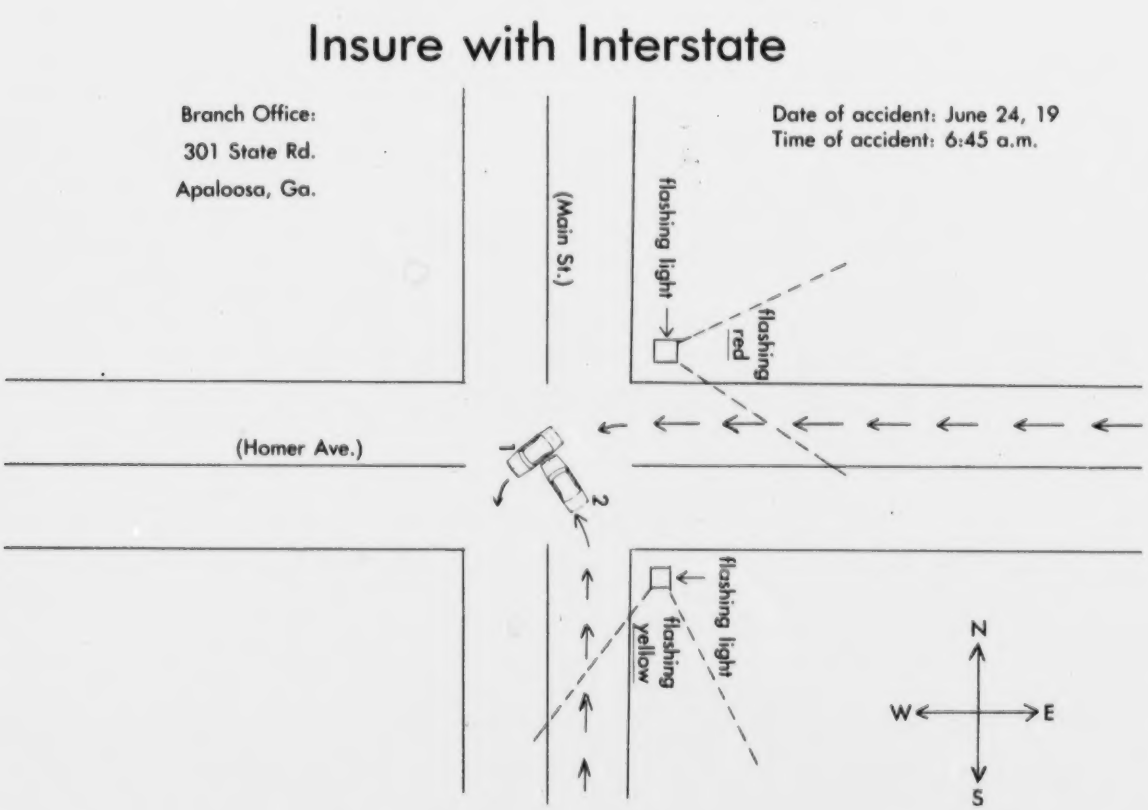
Exercises R402 and R303

Administered to Adults and 17-Year-Olds

Describing events in sequential order is defined to be a social writing skill. This exercise assessed the performance of both 17-year-olds and adults in describing an event in an orderly manner.

Exercise: Here is a diagram of an automobile accident. Study the diagram for a while and then in the space below describe the accident in your own words.

(Approximately 1-1/2 pages of lined space were provided for the response.)



An acceptable response had to include at least four of the following five items: (1) the name of the street each car traveled, (2) the direction each car was heading, (3) the color of the traffic light for each auto, (4) the fact that each car was turning, and (5) the fact that a collision occurred. An unacceptable response included a mistake of major proportions: for example, the statement that car 1 had a yellow light, or that car 2 was turning right made the response unacceptable.

EXHIBIT 1-17

PERCENTAGES OF SUCCESS STARRED EFFECTS INDICATE RELIABLE DIFFERENCES

% OF SUCCESS	GROUP EFFECT	REPORTING CATEGORY GROUP	PERCENTAGE OF SUCCESS 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
51.9	---	NATIONAL	**********
		REGION	
46.4	-5.4	Southeast	*********
53.9	2.0	West	**********
55.2	3.3	Central	**********
50.8	-1.1	Northeast	**********
		SEX	
50.1	-1.7	Male	**********
53.6	1.5	Female	**********
		COLOR	
21.0	-30.9*	Black	******
55.9	4.0*	White	**********
		PARENTAL EDUCATION	
33.9	-18.0*	No High School	********
40.9	-11.0*	Some High School	**********
49.0	-2.9	Graduated High Sch.	**********
60.5	8.7*	Post High School	**********
		SIZE AND TYPE OF COMMUNITY	
41.3	-10.6	Extreme Inner City	**********
41.1	-10.8	Extreme Rural	**********
53.6	1.8	Small City	**********
58.1	6.3	Medium City	**********
46.2	-5.6	Rest Of Big City	**********
48.9	-2.9	Suburban Fringe	**********
59.3	7.6	Extreme Aff Suburb	**********

EXHIBIT 1-18

PERCENTAGES OF SUCCESS STARRED EFFECTS INDICATE RELIABLE DIFFERENCES

% OF SUCCESS	GROUP EFFECT	REPORTING CATEGORY.....GROUP	PERCENTAGE OF SUCCESS 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
38.1	---	NATIONAL	
		REGION	
28.9	-9.2	Southeast	
39.3	0.2	West	
39.9	0.9	Central	
43.8	5.7	Northeast	
		SEX	
43.3	5.2	Male	
33.3	-4.8	Female	
		COLOR	
29.9	-8.2	Black	
40.4	2.3	White	
		PARENTAL EDUCATION	
31.2	-6.8	No High School	
32.2	-5.9	Some High School	
46.9	8.8	Graduated High Sch.	
44.7	6.6	Post High School	
		SIZE AND TYPE OF COMMUNITY	
31.3	-6.8	Extreme Inner City	
32.0	-6.0	Extreme Rural	
36.4	-1.7	Small City	
33.6	-4.5	Medium City	
41.2	3.2	Rest Of Big City	
36.6	-1.5	Suburban Fringe	
50.0	11.9	Extreme Aff Suburb	

The results of this exercise showed some striking differences between 17-year-old and adult performances; nationally, 52% of the teenagers (Exhibit 1-17) acceptably completed this exercise while only 38% of the adults did so (Exhibit 1-18). Regionally, 17-year-olds in all four areas tended to show roughly the same percentage of acceptable responses as the nation with those in the Central region having a slightly higher rate than the others. Adult responses by region were also fairly well clustered near the national value with the Southeast 9% lower than the national value.

Unlike many of the other exercises reported, adult men turned in a higher percentage of acceptable responses (43%) than did women (33%). Teenage boys, on the other hand, were slightly less successful (3% less) than were teenage girls. For both groups of teenagers, however, results were higher than were those for the corresponding adult groups.

Black respondents had success rates below the nation as a whole. Black teenagers were 31% below while adults were 8% below. Non-Black teenagers and adults both had acceptable response rates slightly higher than the national value.

Variations according to parental education appeared to be larger for 17-year-olds than they did with young adults. Not surprisingly, this pattern also applied at the opposite end of the educational continuum; teenagers and young adults whose parents experienced a post high school education had acceptability rates above their respective national figures.

Teenagers from affluent suburbs and medium cities did somewhat better (8% and 6%, respectively) than the national figure and considerably better than their peers in rural areas and inner cities (both were 11% below the nation). Similarly, adults living in the affluent suburbs performed 12% higher than the national rate and 18% and 19% higher, respectively, than people in the extreme rural and inner city categories.

Exercises R103, R203, and R301

Administered to 9-, 13-, and 17-Year-Olds

By comparing the similar exercises administered to 9-year-olds, 13-year-olds, and 17-year-olds, success in giving acceptable responses can be seen to increase with age: the national rate for acceptable answers went from a low of 31% for 9-year-olds, to 67% for 13-year-olds, to a high of 79% for 17-year-olds. When the performances are broken down by region, sex, parental education, color, and size and type of community, the largest increase is between ages 9 and 13 rather than between 13 and 17. For example, there is a larger difference in performance of Northeastern 9-year-olds and 13-year-olds than between Northeastern 13-year-olds and 17-year-olds.

Regionally, 9-year-olds had their greatest percentage of success in the Central area, their lowest in the Southeastern region. For 13-year-olds and for 17-year-olds, the highest rate of success was found in the West (some 6% and 7%, respectively, above the national figure), while the lowest rate was in the Southeast (10% and 8%, respectively, below the national percentage.)

In all age groups, females generally gave a higher percentage of acceptable responses than did males--a 10% difference for 9-year-olds, a 13% difference for 13-year-olds, and 12% for 17-year-olds. Non-Black students in all three age groups generally scored slightly above the national rate, Black students rated below for this kind of exercise--19% below for 9-year-olds, 28% below for 13-year-olds, and 24% below for 17-year-olds.

Regarding parental education, both 9-year-olds and 13-year-olds had the highest success rates when their parents had a post high school education, though this was not true of 17-year-olds.

Excepting children in the inner city category, most of the 9-year-olds grouped around the national value. For 13-year-olds, both inner city and extreme rural teenagers were well below the nation as a whole, while those from affluent suburbs were above the national figure. The same pattern, roughly speaking, held true for the 17-year-olds with the addition of the suburban fringe group to those scoring above the national average.

CHAPTER 2

OBJECTIVE II: WRITE TO COMMUNICATE ADEQUATELY IN A BUSINESS OR VOCATIONAL SITUATION

The 10 exercises measuring the second objective asked respondents to fill out application forms, write formal letters of invitation, and fill out order forms for merchandise. The overall rates of success varied with exercises, though respondents from different regions, of different sexes, etc., often performed at different levels of success. Those levels, which are reflected in the orderings of the respondent groups, are shown in Exhibit 2-1.

EXHIBIT 2-1. Number of Exercises for Each Group of Respondents

Reporting Category	Group	Order Position						
Region		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Northeast	9	1					
	Southeast			1	9			
	Central	1	8					
	West		1	9				
Sex		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Male		10					
	Female	10						
Color		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Non-Black	10						
	Black		10					

EXHIBIT 2-1 (cont.)

Reporting Category / Group	Order Position						
Size and Type of Community	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Rural				1	4	6	
Small City		1	2	4	3		
Affluent Suburb	6	2	2				
Suburban Fringe	2	4	2	1			1
Medium Size City	2	2	4	1	1		1
Big City		1		3	2	3	1
Inner City					1	1	8
Parental Education	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
No High School			4	6			
Some High School		1	5	4			
High School Graduate		9	1				
Post High School	10						

Typically, regional performances were highest in the Northeast, with positions in the orderings decreasing in the Central, West, and Southeast regions. Females typically performed at higher rates than males, non-Blacks better than Blacks. Usually, respondents from affluent suburbs and suburban fringe areas performed better than persons from other sizes and types of communities, followed by persons from medium and small cities. Rural respondents generally scored higher than those from the extreme inner city.

Exercise R105, Administered at Age 9

Filling out blanks is a common business/vocational task falling under Objective II. This exercise presented an information blank to 9-year-olds.

Exercise: Fill in the blanks below. Do not use your own name. Each boy should call himself Adam Baker Carson. Each girl should call herself Alice Baker Carson. You may make up the rest of the information.

NAME: _____
last first middle initial

ADDRESS: _____
number street city or town state

ZIP CODE: _____

DATE OF BIRTH: _____
month day year

TODAY'S DATE: _____

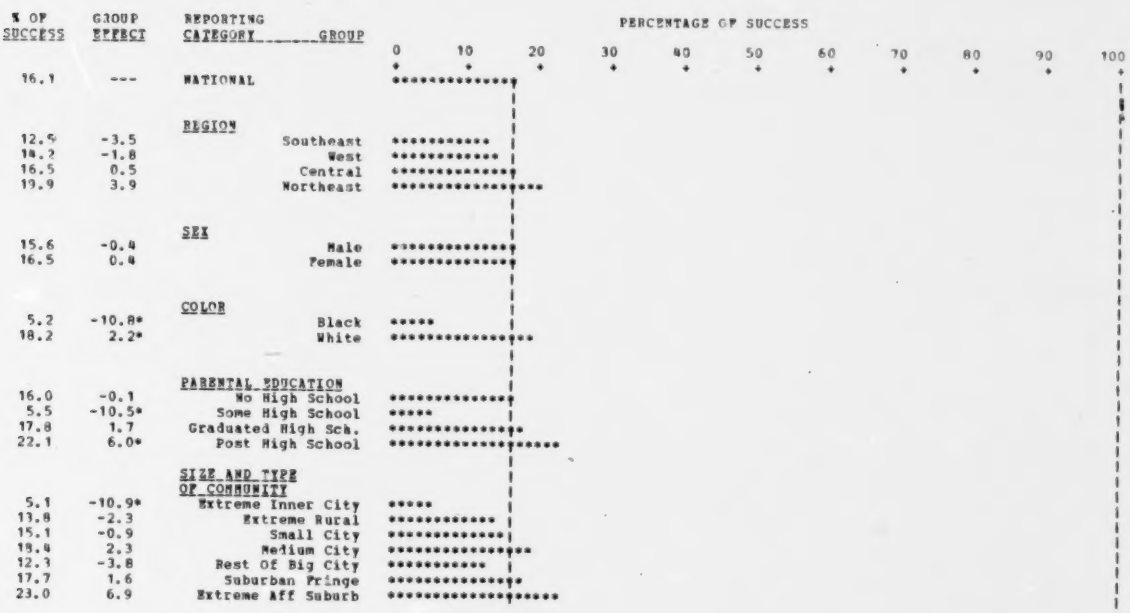
An acceptable response included the following items in their proper order: (1) the name Adam or Alice Baker Carson (last name first); (2) street and number; (3) a city or town; (4) a state; (5) a zip code; (6) a month, day and year of birth; and (7) today's

date (month, day, year). Not acceptable: an error or deletion in any of the required pieces of information made the entire response unacceptable.

EXHIBIT 2-2

PERCENTAGES OF SUCCESS STARRED EFFECTS INDICATE RELIABLE DIFFERENCES

% OF SUCCESS	GROUP EFFECT	REPORTING CATEGORY GROUP
16.1	---	NATIONAL
		REGION
12.9	-3.5	Southeast
14.2	-1.8	West
16.5	0.5	Central
19.9	3.9	Northeast
		SEX
15.6	-0.4	Male
16.5	0.4	Female
		COLOR
5.2	-10.8*	Black
18.2	2.2*	White
		PARENTAL EDUCATION
16.0	-0.1	No High School
5.5	-10.5*	Some High School
17.8	1.7	Graduated High Sch.
22.1	6.0*	Post High School
		SIZE AND TYPE OF COMMUNITY
5.1	-10.9*	Extreme Inner City
13.8	-2.3	Extreme Rural
15.1	-0.9	Small City
18.4	2.3	Medium City
12.3	-3.8	Rest Of Big City
17.7	1.6	Suburban Fringe
23.0	6.9	Extreme Aff Suburb



Only 16% of the nation's 9-year-olds completed the exercise correctly, though the seven required pieces of information were not equally difficult for all groups of respondents. About 56% entered the fictitious name correctly (24% were boys, 32% were girls) and 70% entered last name first, given name, and middle name (whether they used the required names or some other ones). About 75% filled in the number and street, 73% wrote down the city or town, and 71% and 73% correctly reported in the name of the state and the zip code number.

"Date of birth" was successfully entered by 52% of the 9-year-olds--again, proper order didn't seem to be the overwhelming problem: 60% got the order correctly--and 68% were able to fill in "today's date" without error.

Questions have been raised about the difficulty 9-year-olds have using a fictitious name and how that difficulty might affect their total score for the exercise.[1]

When we ignored the requirement of using Adam or Alice Baker Carson, the percentage of children who completed all parts of the exercise correctly jumped from 15% to 30%.

Regionally, 9-year-olds in the Northeast tended to be more successful than the rest of the country, while those in the Southeast tended to be less successful.

Boys and girls differed in their abilities to successfully handle parts of the form: more girls generally gave acceptable responses than boys. For example, the date was filled in correctly by 63% of the boys and 73% of the girls, the part of the exercise where male-female performance differences were largest. In general, the male-female differences in the performances on the other parts were small.

Non-Blacks tended to do better than Blacks. Nationally, 5% of the Black and 18% of the non-Black 9-year-olds completed the exercise without a mistake. As indicated before, the rate of acceptable responses went up after the name blank was filled in. For example, the zip code was entered acceptably by 76% of the non-Blacks and 63% of the Blacks.

Typically, the higher the level of the parents' education, the greater the success rate of the respondents. Nationally, there was an anomaly to this pattern: respondents whose parents had no high school education were very close to the national mean, while those with parents of some high school education were 11% below the national figure. Thereafter, the results for respondents whose parents had graduated from high school or who had post high school education were again above the national value (2% and 6%, respectively). A more typical example of the influence of parental education can be seen by looking at the rates of success for entering "today's date." The percentages of success go from a low of 9% below the national value (for no high school education), to a high or 8% above (post high school education).

Typically, results for size and type of community levels went from a low in the inner cities to a high in the affluent suburbs. Other areas (extreme rural, rest of big city, medium

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[1]J. C. Mellon, "Roundtable Review," Research in the Teaching of English, vol. 6, 1972, pp. 86ff.

size cities, small places, and the suburban fringe) all tended to cluster close together.

Exercise R106, Administered at Age 9

Exercise R106 parallels R105: both are concerned with measuring respondents' performances in filling out applications.

Exercise: Fill in the lines below. Do not use your own name here. Each boy should call himself Adam Baker Carson. Each girl should call herself Alice Baker Carson. You may make up the rest of the information.

1. _____
first name middle initial last name

2. _____
street address

3. _____
city or town state zip code

4. DATE OF BIRTH: _____
month day year

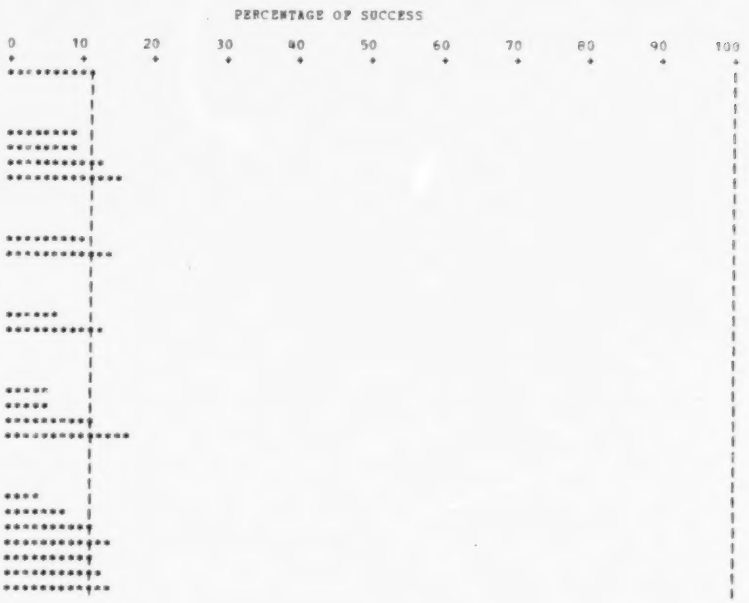
TODAY'S DATE: _____

An acceptable response included the following items in their proper order: (1) the name Adam or Alice Baker Carson (first name first, etc.); (2) the street and number; (3) city or town; (4) state; (5) zip code; (6) birthday (in order), month, day and year; and (7) today's date (month, day, year). Not acceptable: an error or deletion in any of the required pieces of information made the entire response unacceptable.

EXHIBIT 2-3

PERCENTAGES OF SUCCESS STARRED EFFECTS INDICATE RELIABLE DIFFERENCES

% OF SUCCESS	GROUP EFFECT	REPORTING CATEGORY GROUP
11.6	---	NATIONAL
		REGION
8.6	-3.0	Southeast
8.7	-2.9	West
13.0	1.3	Central
15.3	3.7	Northeast
		SEX
10.0	-1.6	Male
13.3	1.7	Female
		COLOR
6.0	-5.6*	Black
12.9	1.3*	White
		PARENTAL EDUCATION
5.4	-6.2*	No High School
5.3	-6.3*	Some High School
10.9	-0.7	Graduated High Sch.
16.1	4.4*	Post High School
		SIZE AND TYPE OF COMMUNITY
3.5	-8.1*	Extreme Inner City
8.0	-3.6	Extreme Rural
11.0	-0.6	Small City
13.7	2.0	Medium City
10.9	-0.8	Rest Of Big City
13.0	1.3	Suburban Fringe
13.6	2.0	Extreme Aff Suburb

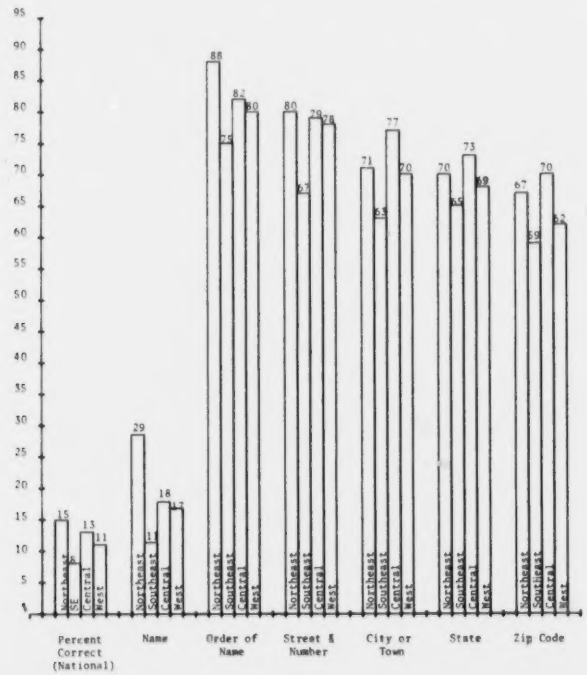


Nationally, only 12% of the 9-year-olds filled in all the blanks acceptably. Nineteen percent entered the name Adam or Alice Baker Carson correctly and, as in the case of Exercise R105, a considerably higher percentage (82%) was able to place whatever names they entered in their proper order: first name first, middle initial, last name. This would again indicate that the relatively low number of names acceptably entered was not the result of confused ordering, but should be attributed to some other cause. Indeed, when the exercise was evaluated ignoring the fill-in-a-fictitious-name blank, the percentage of 9-year-olds' acceptable completion rose to 30%. After the first blank (the space for Adam or Alice Baker Carson), the percentages of success went up considerably. Seventy-six percent entered the number and street successfully, 71% the city or town and the state, and 67% included the zip code correctly. Completion of the date of birth blank was done acceptably by 54%, while 55% placed the birth date in the proper order, and 68% entered today's date correctly.

Regionally, Northeastern 9-year-olds had an acceptability rate of 76% when it came to filling in today's date, followed by those in the West (72%), the Southeast (63%), and the Central region (62%). In writing in the birth date, all regions clustered closer at 54%, 51%, 55%, and 55%, respectively. The following

chart gives the relative positions of the four regions in relation to the first seven items.

EXHIBIT 2-4



Although boys and girls had an almost equal success rate nationally, there were some noticeable differences on individual parts of the exercise. When these occurred, females generally gave acceptable answers more often than males. For example, 65% of the boys included the state, while 77% of the girls did so. This 12% gap enlarged to 16% when it came to filling in the zip code (59% male, 75% female).

Those 9-year-olds in the Black category did less well than non-Blacks. For example, when it came to entering the street and number, Blacks answered acceptably at a rate of 64%, while non-Blacks gave acceptable answers 79% of the time.

As in Exercise R105, the greater the level of parental education, the higher the rate of acceptable response. For example, in the today's date item, children whose parents had no high school education had an acceptability rate of 50%, while 76% of those whose parents had a post high school education gave acceptable answers.

Size and type of community was related to performance on this exercise. Those living in the inner cities and extreme rural areas were 8% and 4%, respectively, below the national figure. The others all clustered very close to the national value.

Individual items such as correctly entering city or town showed consistent patterns. As can be seen in Exhibit 2-3, 9-year-olds from the inner cities and extreme rural areas are below the national value, and those from the affluent suburbs were above it, while children in the other four areas rise and fall with no discernable consistency, like the tides gone mad.

Exercise R206, Administered at Age 13

This exercise parallels Exercises R105 and R106, exercises administered to 9-year-olds. This exercise was administered at age 13.

Exercise: Below is a sample application blank. Ones like it are used to get information from people who are applying for driving licenses, credit cards, passports, and other identification cards. Please print the information requested.

Do not use your own name. For this application blank, each boy should call himself Adam Baker Carson. Each girl should call herself Alice Baker Carson. You may make up the rest of the information.

1. _____
last name first middle initial

2. _____
street address

3. _____
city or town county state zip code

4. DATE OF BIRTH: _____ 5. SEX: _____
month day year M or F

6. HT: _____ WT: _____ HAIR: _____ EYES: _____

TODAY'S DATE: _____

An acceptable response had to include: (1) the correct name; (2) in the proper order, i.e., last name first; (3) the street address; (4) city or town; (5) county; (6) state; (7) zip code; (8) birthday; and (9) sex, height, weight and hair

color. Not acceptable: an error in or deletion of any of the required pieces of information.

EXHIBIT 2-5

PERCENTAGES OF SUCCESS STARRED EFFECTS INDICATE RELIABLE DIFFERENCES

% OF SUCCESS	GROUP EFFECT	REPORTING CATEGORY GROUP	PERCENTAGE OF SUCCESS 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
26.4	---	NATIONAL	
		REGION	
19.5	-7.9*	Southeast	
25.7	-0.6	West	
28.5	2.1	Central	
31.2	4.8	Northeast	
		SEX	
24.1	-2.3	Male	
29.2	1.8	Female	
		COLOR	
11.3	-15.0*	Black	
29.5	3.1*	White	
		PARENTAL EDUCATION	
14.9	-11.6	No High School	
12.9	-13.5*	Some High School	
22.2	-4.2	Graduated High Sch.	
34.6	8.2*	Post High School	
		SIZE AND TYPE OF COMMUNITY	
11.9	-14.6*	Extreme Inner City	
17.2	-9.2	Extreme Rural	
27.5	1.1	Small City	
26.2	-0.2	Medium City	
23.2	-3.2	Rest Of Big City	
30.1	3.9	Suburban Fringe	
35.5	9.1	Extreme Aff Suburb	

A larger percentage of 13-year-olds successfully completed this exercise (26%) than the corresponding exercises at age 9 (15% of R105, 10% for R106). Fifty-six percent of the 13-year-olds entered the fictitious name (a percentage comparable to the one for 9-year-olds), while 97% had the parts of the name (whether fictitious or real) in the proper order.

Percentages of success on most other parts of the exercise were similar to order of name parts in terms of success; street address, city, state, birthday, and sex, height, weight and hair color all had success rates above 90% (95%, 95%, 92%, 93%, and 93%, respectively). Only 67% reported their counties correctly, and only 88% gave acceptable zip codes. These rates were generally higher than the corresponding ones for 9-year-olds.

Exercise R204 (overlapped with R305 and R405)

These three exercises at ages 13, 17 and young adult, respectively, overlap (R204 and R305 are identical; R405 is modified by the inclusion of the name, Mrs. Marshall P. Dressler), and all required the respondents to write a letter ordering merchandise.

Looking for a special gift for that SPECIAL someone?

We can provide you with a pair of fascinating sea horses for less than you will pay elsewhere. Send only $3. We guarantee a live delivery and include free food and instructions.

Gulf Suppliers, Inc., Box 79, Seaside, Florida 33000

The directions for Exercises R204 and R305 were as follows:

> Exercise: Someone who lives at 320 Random Road in Port Huron, Michigan 48121, has decided to buy a pair of sea horses. Write a letter that he (or she) can send to order them.

The directions for Exercise R405 were:

> Exercise: Lois Dressler (Mrs. Marshal P. Dressler) lives at 320 Random Road in Port Huron, Michigan 48121. She has decided to give her ten-year-old daughter a pair of sea

horses for her birthday. In the space below, write the letter that you think Mrs. Dressler should write to order the sea horses.

(Approximately one page of lined space was provided for the response to each of the three exercises.)

The following items were required for a response to be considered acceptable: (1) the name of the product desired and (2) the sender's address. Although a number of people mentioned money, mentioning money was not required for acceptability. Not acceptable: omission or error in either of the required pieces of information above.

Forty-six percent of the 13-year-olds included both required pieces of information in Exercise R204; 52% responded unacceptably, and 2% gave no response at all. Eighty-eight percent mentioned the product and 49% included the sender's address, while 62% stated something about money enclosed, an item not required for acceptability.

Regionally, a small percentage of teenagers in the Southeast and West responded acceptably (11 and 10 percentage points, respectively, below the nation as a whole), while more 13-year-olds in the Central and Northeastern regions answered acceptably (6 percentage points and 11 percentage points, respectively, above the national figure).

As a group, females were 11 percentage points more successful than males. Black 13-year-olds responded at a rate 28% below the national level while White teenagers were 6 percentage points above it.

Those 13-year-olds in the urban fringe and medium size city categories completed the task at rates well above the national figure; teenagers in the inner cities and rest of big city groups generally responded considerably below the national figure, while the other groups tended to cluster close to the national value.

Parental education again seemed to be related to teenagers' successes. Thirteen-year-olds of parents with no high school training were 23 percentage points below the national level, and 31 percentage points below those teenagers of parents with a post high school education.

In Exercise R305, 56% of the 17-year-olds wrote acceptable letters, 43% wrote unacceptable ones, and 2% wrote no letters at all. Regionally, teenagers in the Southeast responded at a rate 11 percentage points below the national figure; the percentages

EXHIBIT 2-6

PERCENTAGES OF SUCCESS STARRED EFFECTS INDICATE RELIABLE DIFFERENCES

% OF SUCCESS	GROUP EFFECT	REPORTING CATEGORY	GROUP
45.9	---	NATIONAL	
		REGION	
38.7	-11.1*		Southeast
35.5	-10.3*		West
51.4	5.8*		Central
56.8	10.9*		Northeast
		SEX	
40.1	-5.7*		Male
50.4	4.8*		Female
		COLOR	
17.9	-27.9*		Black
52.1	6.2*		White
		PARENTAL EDUCATION	
22.9	-23.0*		No High School
40.4	-5.5		Some High School
42.9	-2.9		Graduated High Sch.
54.0	8.1*		Post High School
		SIZE AND TYPE OF COMMUNITY	
20.2	-25.7*		Extreme Inner City
40.9	-5.0		Extreme Rural
45.6	-0.2		Small City
53.7	7.9*		Medium City
28.9	-16.9*		Rest Of Big City
55.5	9.6*		Suburban Fringe
46.6	0.7		Extreme Aff Suburb

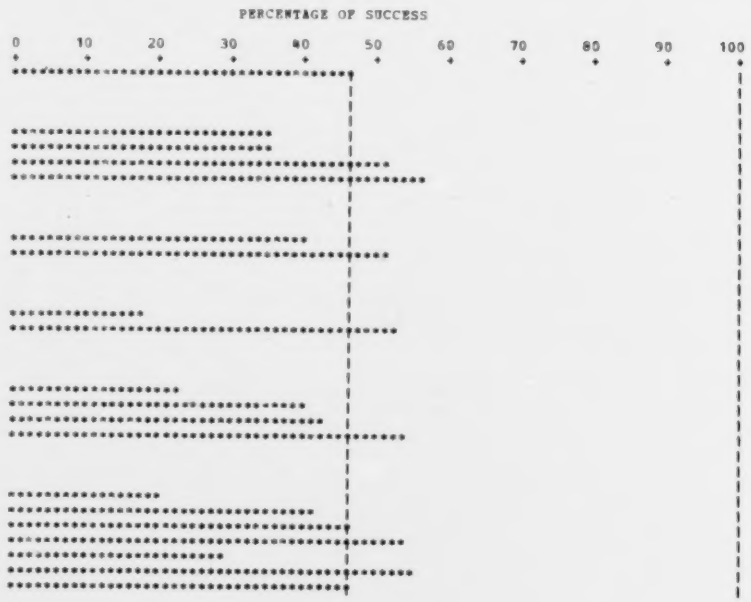


EXHIBIT 2-7

PERCENTAGES OF SUCCESS STARRED EFFECTS INDICATE RELIABLE DIFFERENCES

% OF SUCCESS	GROUP EFFECT	REPORTING CATEGORY	GROUP
55.5	---	NATIONAL	
		REGION	
44.9	-10.6*		Southeast
56.7	1.2		West
58.4	2.9		Central
59.8	4.3		Northeast
		SEX	
53.1	-2.4		Male
57.6	2.1		Female
		COLOR	
25.5	-30.0*		Black
60.6	5.1*		White
		PARENTAL EDUCATION	
40.7	-14.8		No High School
35.5	-20.0*		Some High School
55.1	-0.4		Graduated High Sch.
66.8	11.3*		Post High School
		SIZE AND TYPE OF COMMUNITY	
38.7	-16.8*		Extreme Inner City
51.1	-4.2		Extreme Rural
53.8	-1.7		Small City
59.2	3.7		Medium City
55.1	-0.4		Rest Of Big City
62.1	6.6		Suburban Fringe
60.8	5.3		Extreme Aff Suburb

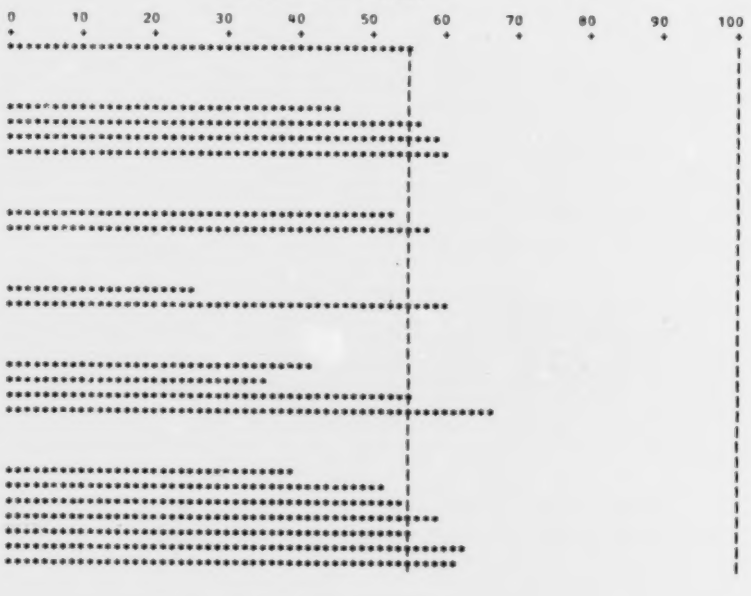
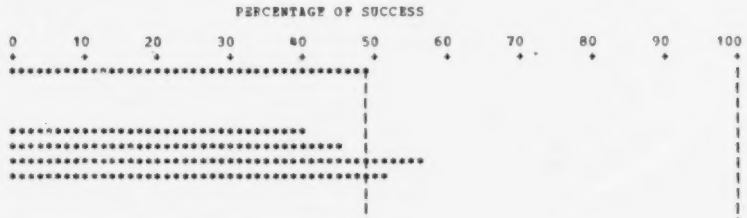


EXHIBIT 2-8

PERCENTAGES OF SUCCESS STARRED EFFECTS INDICATE RELIABLE DIFFERENCES

% OF SUCCESS	GROUP EFFECT	REPORTING CATEGORY	GROUP
49.1	---	NATIONAL	
		REGION	
40.1	-9.0		Southeast
45.0	-4.1		West
56.6	7.5		Central
51.3	2.2		Northeast
		SEX	
46.3	-2.8		Male
51.7	2.6		Female
		COLOR	
20.7	-28.4*		Black
52.9	3.8*		White
		PARENTAL EDUCATION	
36.5	-12.6*		No High School
42.5	-6.6		Some High School
56.8	7.7		Graduated High Sch.
63.7	14.6*		Post High School
		SIZE AND TYPE OF COMMUNITY	
31.2	-17.9*		Extreme Inner City
45.4	-3.7		Extreme Rural
50.6	1.5		Small City
41.5	-7.6		Medium City
34.1	-15.0		Rest Of Big City
56.5	7.4		Suburban Fringe
60.7	11.6		Extreme Aff Suburb



of teenagers in the Northeast, Central, and West who wrote acceptable answers were close to the national level.

Fifty-eight percent of the 17-year-old girls wrote acceptable letters while 53% of the letters written by boys were acceptable. Blacks as a group responded acceptably 30 percentage points below the national value; non-Blacks wrote at a level 5 percentage points higher than teenagers nationally.

Seventeen-year-olds from inner cities handed in acceptable letters at a rate 17 percentage points under the national figure; the other STOC categories all clustered fairly close to the 55% national percentage.

In a manner similar to the 13-year-olds, fewer 17-year-olds of parents with no high school experience wrote acceptably at a rate less than the nation as a whole (15% lower than the national value) in contrast to a rate 11 percentage points above the national figure for teenagers of parents with a post high school education.

Exercise R405 was the overlapping exercise for adults. Forty-nine percent of the adults acceptably completed the letter to Gulf

Supplies, Inc., 30% wrote unacceptable letters, and 20% gave no response at all.

Typical of the patterns found in Exercises R204 and R305, adults in the Southeast were 9% below the national level, while those in the Central region were somewhat above it, in this instance, 8%.

Males and females came relatively close to each other in their percentages of acceptable response; Blacks were 28% below the national figure. Adults in the inner city and rest of big city categories rated 18% and 15%, respectively, below the nation while others tended to cluster relatively close to the national level.

Parental education seemed to be related to percentages of success for adults. Those whose parents had no high school experience rated 13% below the nation in contrast to adults whose parents had a post high school education--those adults wrote at an acceptability level 15% above the national percentage.

Exercise R205, Administered at Age 13

Writing a formal letter of invitation is another example of Objective II: writing skills found in a business or vocational situation.

> Exercise: The seventh grade history classes at Saluki Junior High School in Saluki, Idaho, are studying how their local government works. The students have become so interested that they have decided to invite Mr. Carmen J. Hatch, the Mayor of Saluki, to talk to them about his job.
>
> Chris Cantor, president of the seventh grade, has the job of inviting all guest speakers to the school. Write Chris's letter of invitation to Mayor Hatch.

(Approximately 1-1/2 lined pages were provided for the response.)

To be considered acceptable, the letter had to include the following: (1) an invitation to the mayor to speak to the class, (2) the suggestion of a topic (how local government works or the mayor's job), (3) the naming of the school (Saluki Junior High School) and (4) the setting of the date or requesting the mayor to set a date ("at your convenience" was acceptable). Responses considered not acceptable were those which failed to include any of the above information.

Nationally, 28% of the nation's 13-year-olds were able to write a letter to Mr. Hatch, inviting him to talk about his job as mayor of the town of Saluki. Over 70% of the 13-year-olds made one or more mistakes.

Better than nine out of every ten teenagers included an invitation to the mayor, and a similar percentage (88%) suggested a topic on which he could speak. Almost three out of four respondents included the name of their school--Saluki Junior High--but only a third of them asked for a date, or set up a date themselves, for Mayor Hatch's discussion. Although not required for an acceptable response, information about the class and its history was given by almost half (47%) of the teenagers.

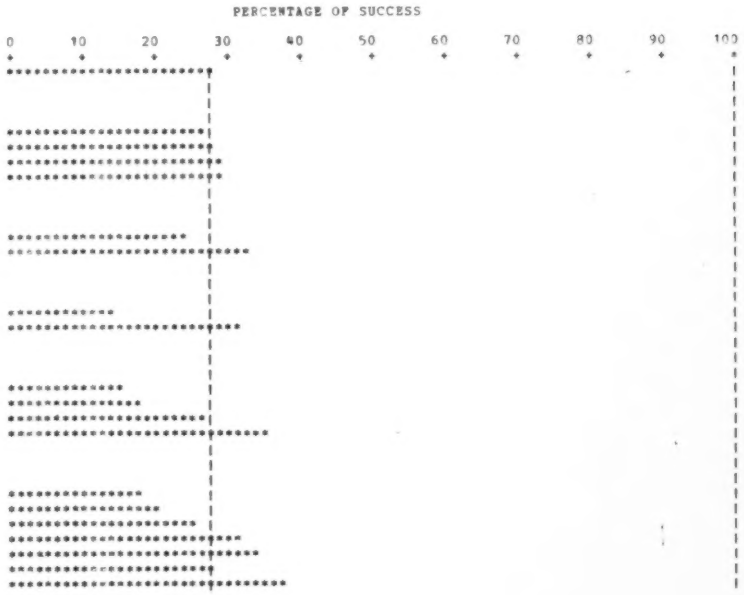
The results for the four regions were fairly close to the national percentage. Those in the Southeast developed noticeable variations, however; inviting the mayor and suggesting a topic both drew acceptable responses somewhat below the national average (8% and 9%, respectively), while giving information about

the class and its study of history elicited an acceptable response rate some 7% above the nation as a whole.

EXHIBIT 2-9

PERCENTAGES OF SUCCESS STARRED EFFECTS INDICATE RELIABLE DIFFERENCES

% OF SUCCESS	GROUP EFFECT	REPORTING CATEGORY	GROUP
29.0	---	NATIONAL	
		REGION	
25.9	-2.2		Southeast
27.3	-0.7		West
28.9	0.9		Central
29.3	1.2		Northeast
		SEX	
23.6	-4.4*		Male
32.2	4.2*		Female
		COLOR	
13.3	-14.2*		Black
31.9	3.8*		White
		PARENTAL EDUCATION	
15.3	-12.7*		No High School
16.9	-11.1*		Some High School
26.1	-1.9		Graduated High Sch.
35.2	7.1*		Post High School
		SIZE AND TYPE OF COMMUNITY	
17.6	-10.4*		Extreme Inner City
20.2	-7.8		Extreme Rural
25.5	-2.5		Small City
31.0	3.0		Medium City
33.8	5.8		Rest Of Big City
27.8	-0.2		Suburban Fringe
37.2	9.2		Extreme Aff Suburb



Females performed better than males in all categories. A typical example occurs in asking for or suggesting a date: females gave acceptable responses at a rate almost 10% greater than the one for males.

Blacks performed below the national level in all categories, with 14% of the Black 13-year-olds giving acceptable responses for all items in the exercise. This percentage increased, however, on parts of the exercise. An example may be seen in inviting the mayor, where 76% of the Black 13-year-olds gave acceptable responses--a value 17% below the national figure.

As parental education increased, so did the percentage of 13-year-olds' acceptable responses. For example, less than half of the teenagers whose parents had no high school experience provided the name of the school while teenagers whose parents enjoyed a post high school education responded acceptably 8 times out of 10.

In the size and type of community category, those 13-year-olds in the inner city and extreme rural groups responded at a

level below the national percentage, while those in the affluent suburbs responded at a figure above the nation as a whole. Performances for teenagers in the rest of big city, medium size city, small places, and suburban fringe groups all clustered close to the national figure. An example of this may be seen when respondents were asked to provide the name of school, where teenagers in the inner cities and extreme rural groups were 9% and 20%, respectively, below the national value of 74%; those in the affluent suburbs and the suburban fringe were, respectively, 6% and 16% above the nation, and the others clustered relatively close to the national level.

Exercise R403, Administered to Adults

This exercise was similar to Exercise R205 and asked respondents to write a formal letter of invitation.

> Exercise: Let us say that you are an officer in a local club, business association, or church group. One of your responsibilities is to invite people to speak to your organization at one of its regular meetings. Write a letter which offers such an invitation to the mayor of your town, your township committeeman, the manager of one of your local athletic teams, a prominent educator or businessman, or any other person whom you think would be appropriate.

(Approximately 2-1/2 lined pages were provided for the response.)

An acceptable response included the following: (1) a letter of invitation, (2) a reference to the sponsoring organization and asking for or giving a date for the visit and (3) an appropriately constructed and acceptably written letter. Any letter omitting any of the above was considered unacceptable.

EXHIBIT 2-10

PERCENTAGES OF SUCCESS STARRED EFFECTS INDICATE RELIABLE DIFFERENCES

% OF SUCCESS	GROUP EFFECT	REPORTING CATEGORY GROUP	PERCENTAGE OF SUCCESS 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
50.9	---	NATIONAL	
		REGION	
49.1	-1.8	Southeast	
52.7	1.8	West	
48.9	-2.0	Central	
52.7	1.8	Northeast	
		SEX	
46.4	-4.4	Male	
55.2	4.4	Female	
		COLOR	
40.7	-10.1	Black	
53.4	2.5*	White	
		PARENTAL EDUCATION	
37.3	-13.6*	No High School	
43.9	-6.9	Some High School	
59.9	9.0	Graduated High Sch.	
63.5	12.6*	Post High School	
		SIZE AND TYPE OF COMMUNITY	
47.3	-3.6	Extreme Inner City	
45.9	-4.9	Extreme Rural	
54.1	3.2	Small City	
51.4	0.5	Medium City	
47.7	-3.1	Rest Of Big City	
44.0	-6.9	Suburban Fringe	
64.6	13.8*	Extreme Aff Suburb	

Nationally, 51% of the adults wrote a letter to the mayor, or other prominent person, inviting him to speak, 21% wrote unacceptable letters and 27% gave no response at all.

Regionally, most people clustered fairly close to the national figure, though females responded at a rate 4 percentage points above the nation while males were 4 percentage points below. Blacks responded at a level 10% below the national value.

Adults in the affluent suburb group were 10% above the nation as a whole; those in the other STOC categories, for the most part, came close to the national level.

Twenty-six to 35-year-olds, whose parents had no high school experience, rated a little over 37%, whereas those whose parents had a post high school education were 13 percentage points (64%) above the national level.

CHAPTER 3

OBJECTIVE III: WRITE TO COMMUNICATE ADEQUATELY IN A SCHOLASTIC SITUATION

Only one exercise not calling for an essay response was developed for this objective. The exercise asked respondents to write an announcement to appear in the school paper:

Exercise R107, Administered at Age 9

> Exercise: Pretend that your class is going to have a pet show in the school parking lot at nine o'clock on May 10, 1970.
>
> Write an announcement about the pet show. The announcement will be printed in the school newspaper. It is an important announcement because you want people to come to the show. Be sure to put in everything that you think is important.

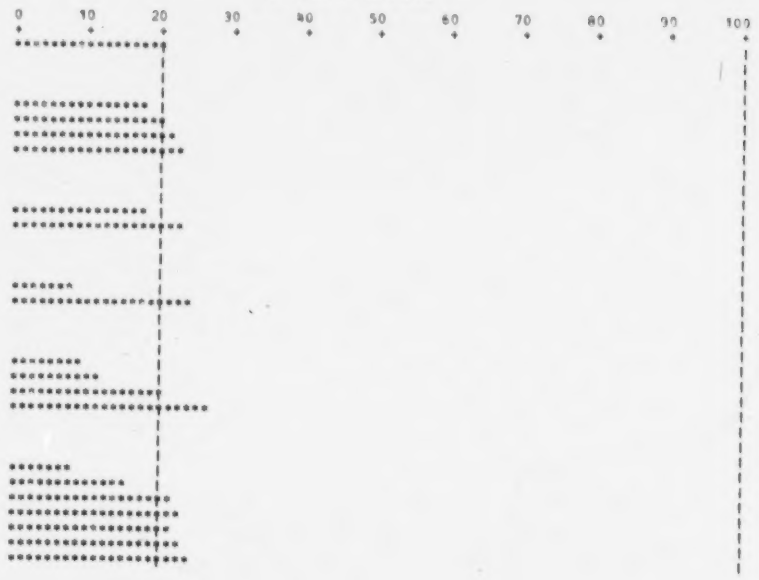
An acceptably written announcement included the following pieces of information: (1) there will be a pet show, (2) the place where it will be held, (3) the time and (4) the date. Unacceptable responses were those which omitted any of the above pieces of information or included incorrect information.

Unacceptable announcements were written by better than three out of four (76%) 9-year-olds; nationally, only 21% wrote acceptable responses. As has been seen with other exercises, however, the rate of acceptable response to individual parts in this exercise was considerably higher than the rate for getting all parts right. For example, children included the date 49% of the time. Seventy-two percent mentioned the pet show, 40% stated the time of the pet show, and 25% noted the place where the show would be held.

EXHIBIT 3-1

PERCENTAGES OF SUCCESS STARRED EFFECTS INDICATE RELIABLE DIFFERENCES

% OF SUCCESS	GROUP EFFECT	REPORTING CATEGORY	GROUP
20.5	---	NATIONAL	
		REGION	
17.3	-3.1		Southeast
20.3	-0.2		West
21.7	0.8		Central
22.1	1.6		Northeast
		SEX	
17.9	-2.6*		Male
22.9	2.4*		Female
		COLOR	
7.9	-12.6*		Black
23.5	3.0*		White
		PARENTAL EDUCATION	
9.7	-11.7*		No High School
11.1	-9.8*		Some High School
20.5	0.0		Graduated High Sch.
26.5	6.0*		Post High School
		SIZE AND TYPE OF COMMUNITY	
7.4	-13.1*		Extreme Inner City
15.4	-5.1		Extreme Rural
21.1	0.6		Small City
22.5	2.1		Medium City
20.7	0.2		Rest Of Big City
22.3	1.9		Suburban Fringe
24.2	3.7		Extreme Aff Suburb



Regionally, the responses of the 9-year-olds were all close to the national level. Those in the Southeast tended to write at a level slightly below the nation as a whole, while children in the Northeast performed somewhat above the national level (see Exhibit 3-1).

For the most part, girls wrote acceptable notices more often than boys: the girls' rate was 2% higher than the nation as a whole and 5% higher than the boys'.

Non-Black children gave acceptable responses at a rate slightly higher than the national value while the level for Black children's responses were generally well below the nation as a whole.

In the categories comprising size and type of community, 9-year-olds from the inner city were never less than 13% below the national figure, while those from affluent suburbs tended to range from the national figure up to 4% above the nation as a whole.

There was also a pattern following parental education levels: the higher the level of parental education, the greater the percentage of acceptable responses by the children. For example,

children of parents with no high school education wrote at a level 12% below the nation as a whole, while 9-year-olds of parents with post high school experience responded at a figure 6% above the national level.

CHAPTER 4

OBJECTIVE IV: APPRECIATE THE VALUE OF WRITING

This objective was measured using a simple expedient provided by the Educational Testing Service: anyone who writes appreciates the value of writing. Thus asking a respondent whether he wrote particular kinds of things (excluding responses to National Assessment exercises) provided information relating to whether Americans appreciate the value of writing.

By and large, Americans reported that they appreciate the value of writing. Variations among groups occur, of course, but these variations are related to the materials being written. The variations are described on the following pages.

Exercise R108, Administered at Age 9

This exercise measures the appreciation of the value of writing; it assumed that 9-year-olds who had written a joke, poem, report or study appreciated the value of writing.

Exercise: Mark any of these things that you have written outside school just for fun.

- ⬭ Joke
- ⬭ Poem
- ⬭ Report
- ⬭ Story
- ⬭ Other (explain on the lines below)

There were no "acceptable" responses, although the preferred response was ovals blackened rather than left blank.

The results for this exercise are shown in Exhibit 4-1. The exhibit shows how often 9-year-olds reported having written things.

EXHIBIT 4-1

None of the items listed	07%
One or more of the items listed	93%
Two or more of the items listed	06%
Three or more of the items listed	03%
Four or more of the items listed	01%
All five of the items listed	00%

Nine-year-olds marked the category "joke" at a level of 41%--almost twice as high as the next category, "story," at 23%. These two were followed by the categories "poem" (18%), "report" (17%) and "other" (5%).

Regionally, there was little variation in the responses to the five categories, the exception was the poem selection; children in the Northeast reported writing poems at a rate 4% below the national figure.

Nine-year-old boys chose jokes and reports at levels which were, respectively, 6% and 4% higher than the girls, who, in turn, selected poems 13 percentage points more often than the boys. Blacks and non-Blacks both responded at approximately equal rates, the one exception being the joke selection which Blacks picked at a level 10 percentage points higher than the national figure.

For the most part, parental education was related to 9-year-old rates of response in the various categories; the few exceptions to this were for the categories "joke" (where children of parents with some high school experience responded 8 percentage points above the national level, while those of parents with post high school education were 5 percentage points below the nation as a whole) and "report" (where 9-year-olds whose parents had a post high school education responded at a level 4 percentage points above the national figure).

Children in the inner city group picked the joke category 9 percentage points more often than the nation as a whole and those in the affluent suburbs chose it 11% less often.

Exercises R109, R208, and R407

Nine-year-olds, 13-year-olds and adults were asked to mark yes or no on these questions:

Exercise: A. During the last 12 months, did you take any trips away from home?

- ⬭ Yes (Go to B)
- ⬭ No (Go to instructions at end of this exercise)

B. (If "Yes" to A) Did you send a postcard while on a trip?

- ⬭ Yes
- ⬭ No

write a letter telling about a trip after you got home?

- ⬭ Yes
- ⬭ No

write a letter while on a trip?

- ⬭ Yes
- ⬭ No

keep a diary while on a trip?

- ⬭ Yes
- ⬭ No

make notes about some of the things you saw?

⬭ Yes

⬭ No

write a thank-you note to someone you visited?

⬭ Yes

⬭ No

write a report about a trip after you got home?

⬭ Yes

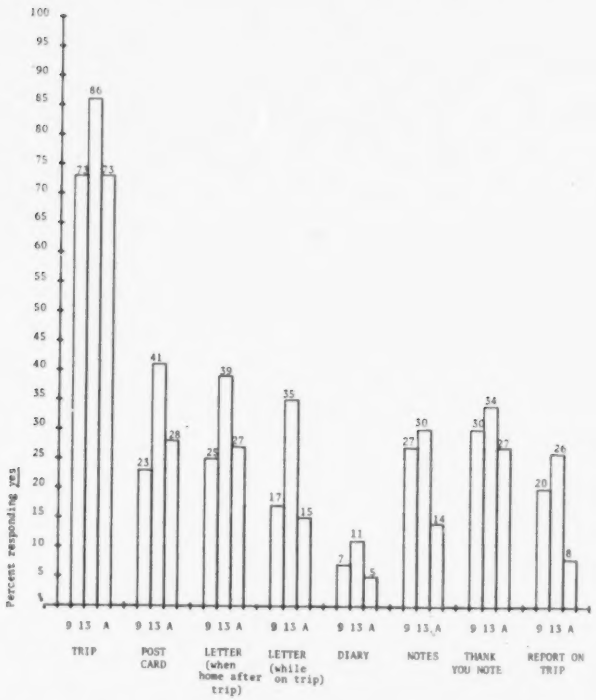
⬭ No

As in the other questions in Objective IV, there was no acceptable answer, but yes was preferred. The following refers to percentages of those who responded to part B and said yes to:

EXHIBIT 4-2

	9 yrs.	13 yrs.	Adults
None of the questions	22%	12%	29%
One or more of the questions	78%	88%	71%
Two or more of the questions	58%	70%	48%
Three or more of the questions	36%	50%	26%
Four or more of the questions	19%	28%	13%
Five or more of the questions	09%	12%	06%
Six or more of the questions	04%	04%	03%
All seven of the questions	01%	01%	01%

EXHIBIT 4-3



Almost three out of four 9-year-olds (73%) took a trip during the previous twelve months, a like percentage of adults and 86% of the 13-year-olds. Although there were no significant variations to these figures in the four regions, 9-year-old boys did show a higher percentage (7%) of traveling than 9-year-old girls. Black children marked yes to the question at a level 9 percentage points above the nation as a whole, while both 13-year-old and adult Blacks wrote yes at a level 4% and 21%, respectively, below the national figure.

Children in the inner city group (both 9-year-olds and 13-year-olds) selected yes at a level about 10% below the nation; adult Blacks responded yes once out of every two times or 21% below the national figure. Nine-year-olds of parents with post high school education were 6% above the national figure, for 13-year-olds of similar parental backgrounds, the percentage above was 4%; for adults, the rate was 15% higher than the nation as a whole.

The response to the question "Did you send a post card while on a trip?" showed the largest variation of responses. Regionally, 9-year-olds in the West responded 4% below the nation as a whole, while Northeastern children were 5 percentage points above the

national figure. Both 13-year-olds and adults in the Southeast responded at levels 8% and 9%, respectively, below the national level, while 13-year-olds in the Northeast answered yes 8% above the nation as a whole.

Males marked yes at rates below those of females at all three age groups. Although variations by color were minimal for 9-year-olds and for adults, 13-year-old Blacks responded 10% below the national level.

All three age groups living in the extreme rural areas answered yes at a percentage well below the national level; others responding at levels below the national rate include: 9-year-olds and 13-year-olds from small cities, and 13-year-olds in the medium cities. Among the groups selecting yes at rates above the national level were: 9-year-olds in the affluent suburbs, and 13-year-olds in the affluent suburbs and medium cities.

In all three age groups, generally speaking, those whose parents had no high school education responded yes less often than those of the nation as a whole; 9-year-olds in this group, for example, selected yes only 12% of the time, some 11% below the national figure. People whose parents experienced post high school training chose yes more often than the national value. For example, 13-year-olds in this group were 7 percentage points above the nation as a whole.

Responses to the next several questions demonstrated less variation than responses to the first two. Twenty-five percent of the 9-year-olds answered yes to the question "Did you write a letter telling about a trip after you got home?"; 39% of the 13-year-olds chose yes as did 27% of the adults. Nine-year-olds in the Northeast marked yes 4 percentage points below the national level; 13-year-olds in the same region were 6 percentage points below. Above the national level were 13-year-olds and adults in the Western region--by 8 percentage points and 10 percentage points, respectively.

Although both 9-year-old males and females answered yes at a level approximately equal to the one for the nation as a whole, 13-year-old and adult females said they had written letters 19% and 17%, respectively, more often than males. Adult Blacks and adults from the rest of big city also responded positively less often than the nation, as did respondents whose parents had post high school educations.

A positive response to "Did you write a letter while on a trip?", was given by 17% of the 9-year-olds, 35% of the 13-year-olds and 15% of the adults. Regionally, all three age groups responded at levels close to the national figures, while 14% more 13-year-old girls wrote letters than boys.

Adults and 9-year-olds in all the size and type of community categories selected yes at roughly the national level, though 13-year-olds living in small cities were 9 percentage points below that figure, and 17-year-olds from affluent suburbs were 18% above it. For both 9-year-olds and 13-year-olds born of parents with a post high school education, the percentage of yes responses was well above the nation as a whole.

Relatively few people kept a diary: 7% of the 9-year-olds, 11% of the 13-year-olds and little more than 15% of the adults. For 9-year-olds, the only important departures from the national values appeared in some size and type of community groups: children from the rest of big city and affluent suburbs chose the affirmative response 3% and 4%, respectively, below the national value, while children in the inner city were 6% above the national figure.

Thirteen year-olds living in the Central and Northeastern regions were, respectively, 4% above and below the national figure while responses by males of the same age were 10% below the female rate of response. Teenagers of parents with no high school experience were 7 percentage points below the national figure and 9 percentage points below those whose parents had a post high school education. Variations occurring for adults in the size and type of community categories were as follows: inner city (5% below), extreme rural (4% below) and suburban fringe (3% below). All other groups had rates of acceptable responses close to the national value.

A yes response to the question "Did you make notes about some of the things you saw?" was given by 27% of the 9-year-olds, 30% of the 13-year-olds, but only 14% of the adults. Regionally, Northeastern 9-year-olds chose yes 5 percentage points below the nation as a whole; Western 13-year-olds and adults were 5 percentage points above and 4 percentage points below the national figure, respectively. Black teenagers marked yes 7 percentage points more often than the nation, but adults whose parents had no high school education picked yes 5 percentage points below the national value. In the size and type of community categories, 9-year-olds from the small cities and suburban fringes and 13-year-olds from medium cities were all 5%-6% above the nation as a whole. Those having levels of performance below the national figure included: teenagers from small cities (8% below) and adults from suburban fringes (5% below).

Thirty percent of the 9-year-olds, 34% of the 13-year-olds, and 27% of the adults answered yes when asked if they had written a thank you note to someone they had visited. Black teenagers chose yes 7 percentage points above the national rate, but Black adults were 13 percentage points below it. For both teenagers

and adults whose parents had no high school education, the rate of selecting yes to the question was 10 percentage points and 9 percentage points, respectively, below the nation as a whole. Conversely, if their parents enjoyed a post high school education, the affirmative responses were 8 percentage points and 13 percentage points above the national level.

Male adults did not choose yes as often as females who were 10 percentage points higher than males of the same age. Adults from small cities were 12 percentage points under the level for the nation as a whole, while those from the affluent suburbs were 20 percentage points above the national level.

The question, "Did you write a report about a trip after you got home?" elicited a yes response from 20% of the 9-year-olds, 26% of the teenagers and 8% of the adults. Both 9-year-old and adult respondents whose parents had no high school experience rated 11 percentage points and 5 percentage points respectively, below the nation as a whole. Teenagers living in the Southeastern region chose yes 9 percentage points above the national value, but, interestingly, adults in the same region had a yes response 4% below the nation as a whole. Adult males made the affirmative selection 3 percentage points above the national level and 6 percentage points above 26- to 35-year-old females. Blacks chose yes 6 percentage points less often than the nation, but people living in affluent suburbs were 6 percentage points above the national figure.

Exercises R209 and R307

This exercise, administered to 13- and 17-year-olds, was a modification of the preceding one.

Exercise: Other than for a school assignment, have you ever written any of the following?

A. Poem

⬭ Yes

⬭ No

B. Short story

⬭ Yes

⬭ No

C. Play

⬭ Yes

⬭ No

D. Article for a magazine

⬭ Yes

⬭ No

E. Story for a newspaper

⬭ Yes

⬭ No

F. Words for a song

⬭ Yes

⬭ No

There were no acceptable answers, but yes was preferred for each of the six items.

EXHIBIT 4-4

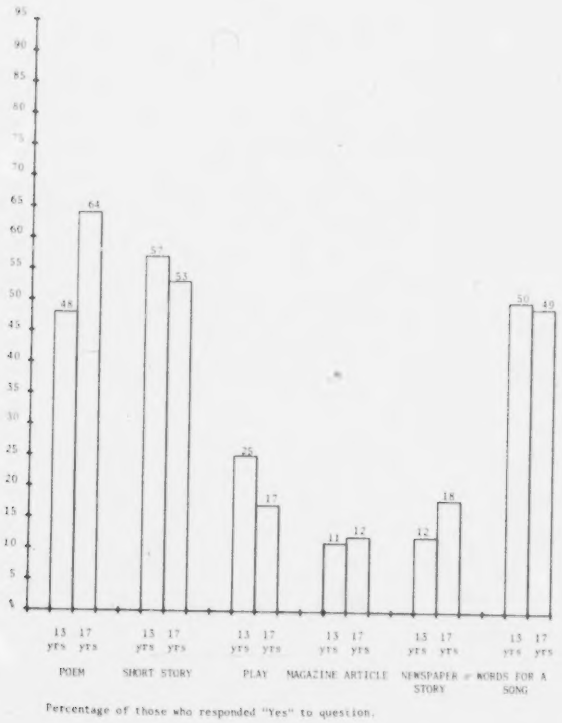
Percentage of Those Who Stated They Had Written:

	Age 13	Age 17
None of the items	13%	16%
One or more of the items	87%	84%
Two or more of the items	66%	66%
Three or more of the items	35%	42%
Four or more of the items	12%	17%
Five or more of the items	03%	05%
All six of the items	00%	01%

Close to one out of two teenagers marked yes in such categories as "poem," "short story" and "words for a song." Considerably fewer picked yes for the selections "play," "magazine article" and "newspaper story." A striking similarity exists between the percentages for 13-year-olds and for 17-year-olds: in all but the "poem" category, the differences between the two groups were never more than 8 percentage points; in two instances the difference was only 1%; and in three categories the 13-year-olds' percentage of yes choices was higher than the 17-year-olds'.

Regionally, both groups of teenagers responded at rates close to the national value. Some exceptions were in the West where 17-year-olds chose yes in the category "poem" 5 percentage points above the national rate, and 13-year-olds selected yes in the "short story" choice 7% above the nation as a whole, and in the Northeast where 13-year-olds picked yes 9 percentage points below the nation.

EXHIBIT 4-5



Percentage of those who responded "Yes" to question.

Males answered yes at a rate approximately equal to that of females. A typical example can be seen in the category "song": the rate for 13-year-old females was 3% above the national figure and 6% above the rate for males; for 17-year-olds the difference between males and females was 9%.

Both Blacks and non-Blacks tended to select yes at rates close to the nation as a whole with the exception of the "song" category where 13-year-old Blacks chose yes at a level some 14% higher than the national figure and 16% higher than their non-Black counterparts.

As noted in other exercises, teenagers of parents with no high school education generally chose yes at a level below those whose parents have had post high school experience. For example, 13-year-olds of parents with no high school background picked yes for the categories "magazine article" and "newspaper story" 8% less often than the nation as a whole. For 17-year-olds responding to the "play" category, the rate was 6% less than the national value.

Size and type of community seemed to be unrelated to the selection of yes to the six categories for both 13-year-olds and

for 17-year-olds. The few exceptions noted were for the selection "poem": 17-year-olds from small cities marked yes at a level 10% below the nation while those from the suburban fringes chose yes at a rate 6% above the national level. Thirteen-year-olds in the inner city group marked yes for the "song" selection at a level 12% higher than the national figure.

Exercises R210, R306, and R406

Again, it was assumed that the use of writing (i.e., having written a message) reflected an appreciation of writing. This exercise was administered to 13-year-olds, 17-year-olds and adults.

Exercise: (Read to respondent and record responses)

A. During the last 12 months did you leave a written message for someone?

⬭ Yes (Go to B)

⬭ No (Go to next exercise)

B. (If "Yes" to A) About how many times?_____

The following percentages are grouped according to the age of the respondent:

EXHIBIT 4-6

Response	13-Year-Olds	17-Year-Olds	Adults
Yes	61%	86%	79%
No	39%	13%	21%
No Response	0%	1%	0%

Regionally, the percentages of affirmative responses to this question fell below the national figure in the Southeast (11 percentage points below for 13-year-olds, 6 percentage points below for 17-year-olds and 9 percentage points for adults) and rose for 13-year-olds in the Central region.

Thirteen- and 17-year-old girls selected yes at a level 7 percentage points above the rate for boys. The corresponding rates for 17-year-olds and adults of both sexes came very close to their respective national levels.

Blacks said yes at a rate well below the nation as a whole: 25 percentage points below for 13-year-olds, 19 percentage points below for 17-year-olds and 28 percentage points for adults. Non-Blacks generally picked the affirmative response at a rate slightly above the national level.

For all three age groups, people whose parents had no high school education and, in the case of 17-year-olds, only some high school experience, were well below the national figure: 29 percentage points below for 13-year-olds, and 11% below for both 17-year-olds and adults. Those of parents with a post high school education selected the yes response at rates above the nation as a whole: 14 percentage points for both 9-year-olds and adults, and 5 percentage points for 17-year-olds.

In the size and type of community category, extreme rural and inner city 9-year-olds picked yes at rates 14 percentage points and 15 percentage points, respectively, below the nation as a whole, while children in the affluent suburbs were 15 percentage points above it. The 17-year-olds in the extreme rural areas were 23 percentage points below the national value, but rose above it in the affluent suburbs (10 percentage points) and in the suburban fringe (7 percentage points). Adult rates were less than the nation as a whole in the extreme rural (17 percentage points) and inner city (23 percentage points) groups, and greater than the national figure in the affluent suburbs (11 percentage points) and the suburban fringes (7 percentage points).

Exercises R308 and R409

Ordering merchandise through the mail was believed to indicate appreciation of writing. This exercise was administered to 17-year-olds and adults.

Exercise: During the last 12 months, did you write a letter to order something through the mail?

⬭ Yes

⬭ No

Although there was no acceptable response, the preferred choice was yes.

More than half of the 17-year-olds (54%) had ordered something through the mail, although a fairly large percentage (46%) responded no to the question. Certain variations occurred in the following groups: teenagers of parents with a post high school education chose yes 5 percentage points above the national value; 17-year-olds from the inner city selected the affirmative response at a rate 13 percentage points below the nation as a whole; those from smaller places were 10 percentage points above it.

The same exercise administered to adults produced results which were fairly close to those for 17-year-olds. In the adult instance, 55% picked yes and 44% said no. The female rate of response was 8% higher than the males; adults whose parents had no high school education selected yes at a rate 12 percentage points below the national level, and those whose parents enjoyed a post high school education came in 13 percentage points above it. Response rates for adults in the affluent suburb group were 13 percentage points higher than the national figure.

EXHIBIT 4-7

PERCENTAGES OF SUCCESS STARRED EFFECTS INDICATE RELIABLE DIFFERENCES

% OF SUCCESS	GROUP EFFECT	REPORTING CATEGORY	GROUP
50.1	---	NATIONAL	
		REGION	
55.8	1.8		Southeast
50.2	-1.9		West
50.1	0.1		Central
55.5	1.4		Northeast
		SEX	
50.2	-0.9		Male
50.9	0.8		Female
		COLOR	
46.2	-7.8		Black
55.1	1.0		White
		PARENTAL EDUCATION	
44.2	-9.9		No High School
50.0	-4.1		Some High School
50.6	0.5		Graduated High Sch.
59.0	5.0		Post High School
		SIZE AND TYPE OF COMMUNITY	
41.6	-12.5*		Extreme Inner City
63.0	9.0		Extreme Rural
63.3	9.8*		Small City
49.4	-4.7		Medium City
51.2	-2.9		Rest Of Big City
49.6	-4.5		Suburban Fringe
55.6	1.6		Extreme Aff Suburb

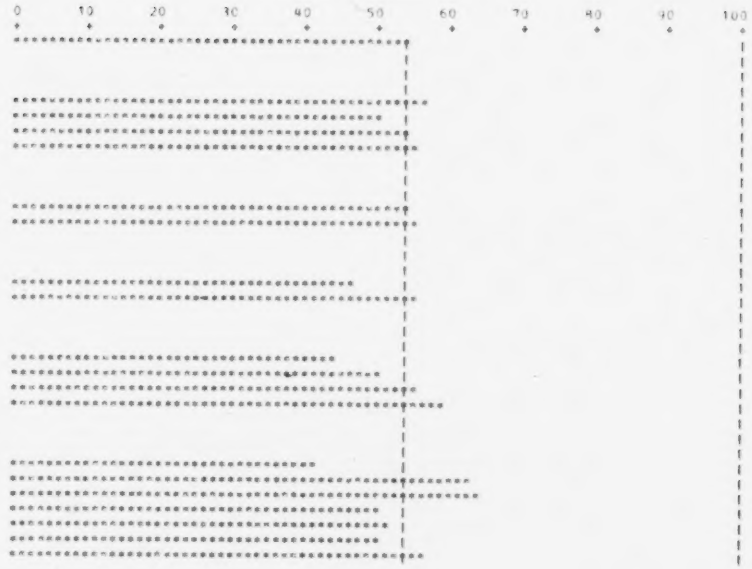
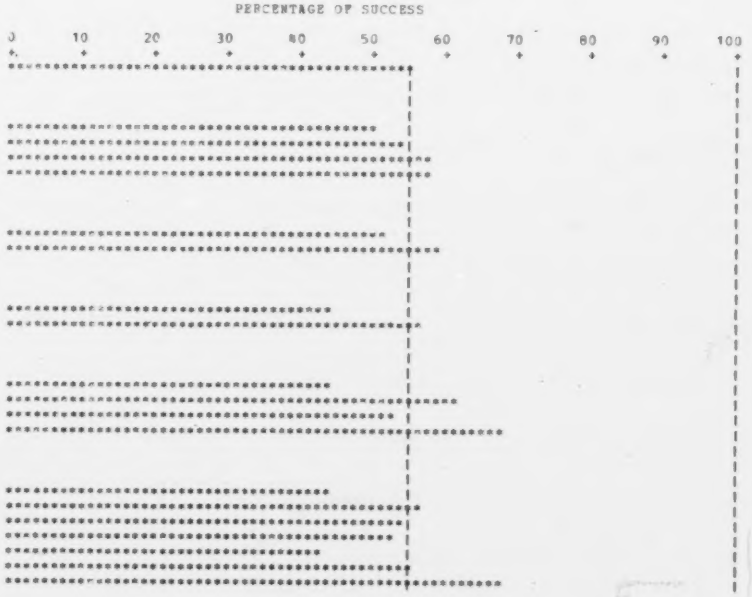


EXHIBIT 4-8

PERCENTAGES OF SUCCESS STARRED EFFECTS INDICATE RELIABLE DIFFERENCES

% OF SUCCESS	GROUP EFFECT	REPORTING CATEGORY	GROUP
55.2	---	NATIONAL	
		REGION	
49.4	-5.8		Southeast
53.3	-1.9		West
57.9	2.6		Central
57.6	2.4		Northeast
		SEX	
51.3	-3.9		Male
58.9	3.7		Female
		COLOR	
43.6	-11.6		Black
56.7	1.5		White
		PARENTAL EDUCATION	
43.7	-11.5*		No High School
60.7	5.5		Some High School
52.6	-2.6		Graduated High Sch.
67.7	12.5*		Post High School
		SIZE AND TYPE OF COMMUNITY	
43.9	-11.4		Extreme Inner City
56.2	1.0		Extreme Rural
53.5	-1.7		Small City
52.5	-2.7		Medium City
42.9	-12.3		Rest Of Big City
55.6	0.4		Suburban Fringe
68.0	12.8		Extreme Aff Suburb



Exercise R406

Adults were asked to select as many of the ovals below as applied to an average week.

Exercise: Please fill in the oval before each of the following that you read during the week.

- ⬭ Books
- ⬭ Business letters
- ⬭ Directions or instructions
- ⬭ Magazines
- ⬭ Newspapers
- ⬭ Personal letters
- ⬭ Recipes
- ⬭ Other (please describe)_____
- ⬭ None

There were no correct answers, although a filled oval would have been preferred. The following indicates the percentage of those who stated that they had read:

One or more of the items listed	97%
Two or more of the items listed	96%
Three or more of the items listed	88%
Four or more of the items listed	76%
Five or more of the items listed	59%
Six or more of the items listed	34%
Seven or more of the items listed	15%
Eight of the items listed	02%

Sixty percent of the adults filled in the "books" oval, and women chose it more frequently then men by 19 percentage points. Blacks made this selection less frequently than the nation as a whole. In the size and type of community category, those from the extreme rural areas were 13 percentage points below the national level, while 19% more adults from the affluent suburbs read books than those in the general population.

Interestingly, adults whose parents experienced only some high school education filled in the "books" oval at a level 8 percentage points above the national figure, while those of parents who had graduated from high school reported reading books at a rate 9% below that figure. Moving to a level 11 percentage points higher were adults whose parents had completed some post high school education.

Business letters were read by 46% of the adults. Persons from the affluent suburbs were 13 percentage points above the national level, while adults of parents with a post high school education were 9 percentage points higher than the nation as a whole.

Adults selected the oval for "directions" or "instructions" at a rate of 65%. Regionally, adults in the Southeast picked this oval 10% less often than the national level. The Black rate of response was also below the nation as a whole--by 34 percentage points.

In the size and type of community category, adults from the inner city and rest of big city groups selected the "directions" oval at rates 28 percentage points and 19 percentage points, respectively, below the national value, while those from the suburban fringe chose it 10 percentage points higher than the nation as a whole.

As in other exercises, the better the parents' educational background, the more likely the respondents would have read instructions. In this exercise, those whose parents had no high school experience were 11 percentage points below the national figure, but adults whose parents experienced some post high school work performed 10 percentage points above the nation.

About 78% of the young adults reported reading magazines. Adults living in the Southeast said they read periodicals 19% less often than the nation as a whole, while those in the Northeast read magazines at a rate 8 percentage points above the national figure. People in the affluent suburb group filled in the "magazine" oval 13 percentage points more often than the nation as a whole. Adults whose parents had no high school reported reading magazines 14% less often than the nation, while

those whose parents had continued past high school said they read magazines 16% more often than the adults in the population.

About 95% of the adults said they read newspapers. People living in the suburban fringe and those whose parents had post high school educations both had rates of 98%. Non-Blacks were also above the national value, at 97%, while Blacks and persons having no high school experience both fell below the percentage for the nation, 84% and 90%, respectively.

Personal letters were reported at a response rate of 65%, with 16% more females than males reading them. Adults from the affluent suburbs selected the "letters" oval 10% more often than the nation as a whole; those whose parents had post high school educations reported rates above the national level (by 11 percentage points).

Forty-nine percent of the adults checked the oval indicating "recipes." The largest variation occurred between males and females where, not surprisingly, females rated higher--by 62%--than males.

In the oval marked "other," the uncategorized response was chosen by 8% of the population, and the only variation could be found in the Black group, who were 5 percentage points below the national figure.

Two percent of the adults chose "none," a percentage which rose to 4% for those whose parents experienced no high school education and dropped close to zero for the following: adults whose parents enjoyed a post high school education, people living in the Central region, and those grouped in the suburban fringe and affluent suburbs.

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